

SAMPLE



JOCKEY

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About the card sort

- The cards describe competencies, behaviours and qualities of a jockey.
- The sort should be completed in a conversation with a trainer or mentor.
- The cards should be used to identify competencies to grow into super strengths or areas to work on.
- On the back of the cards are ideas for actions to support development planning.

Categories of generic competencies include:

- mental skills
- self
- athlete life
- health
- physical
- technical skills
- tactics

Turn over to see the full list of competencies.

Mental Skills	Self	Athlete Life	Health	Physical	Technical Skills	Tactics
Performance Focus	Ownership of Development	Managing Time and Energy	Health	Aerobic Fitness	Jumping out of the Gates	Race Plan
Motivation and Passion	Drive and Ambition	Circle of Support	Women's Health	Balance	Field Positioning	Decision-Making and Adaptability
Resilience	Competitiveness	Financial Skills, Facilities & Equipment	Injury Prevention	Strength	Control	Analysing Race Conditions
Self-Belief and Confidence	Communication	Future, Change, and Career Planning	Injury Recovery	Recovery	Pace and Distance	Rider Feedback
Preparation	Continuous Growth	Relationships	Mental Health and Wellbeing		Use of Whip	Racing Rules
Performance Review	Identity, Purpose and Self-Awareness	Schedules	Sleep		Personal Style	
Practicing Pressure	Work Ethic	Managing Media	Nutrition			
Mastery		Supplements and Drugs	Weight Management			
Routines		Safety				
Composure						

2

How to use the cards

ATHLETE

1

SORT FOR STRENGTHS

Sort the cards into roughly three even piles with the following black cards forming the top of each set:

- high/strength
- middle/average
- low/work-on; and
- not applicable.

Sort based on your highest level of competition.

2

EXPLAIN/RECORD

Explain reasons for placement, focusing on strengths and areas to work on. Take a photo or fill in the worksheets to record placement to refer back to on review.

3

PRIORITISE

Once completed, pick up the cards sorted as areas to work on. You may also wish to select some strengths to include in your development plan that could become super strengths. Flip over the header cards and sort again for priorities for the next season or training block using the black cards (high, medium, low). Aim to narrow down to not more than two development priorities per category.

*Once you have identified your priorities, turn over the cards.
The back of the cards have development planning ideas.*

Please Turn Over

2

How to use the cards

COACH/ MENTOR

1

INTRODUCTION

Explain the purpose of the process.

Explain the process (see website for more detail) and discuss confidentiality.

Check for comfort and questions.

2

GUIDE

Guide the process.

Question, clarify and summarise to help the jockey identify the critical priorities.

Listen with an open mind, avoid making judgements.

3

PLAN

Record placement of cards with notes. Select priorities emerging from the second sort and identify development actions (see ideas on the back of cards) in collaboration with the jockey.

TIP: You can complete a separate card sort for comparative discussion.

STRENGTH



COMPETENCIES ASSESSED AS A STRENGTH AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL
OF COMPETITION, IN RELATION TO OTHER COMPETENCIES

HIGH PRIORITY



COMPETENCIES ASSESSED AS A HIGH PRIORITY FOR
THE NEXT COMPETITION AND TRAINING BLOCK

MIDDLE/AVERAGE



COMPETENCIES ASSESSED AS MIDDLE AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL
OF COMPETITION, IN RELATION TO OTHER COMPETENCIES

MEDIUM PRIORITY



COMPETENCIES ASSESSED AS A MEDIUM PRIORITY FOR
THE NEXT COMPETITION AND TRAINING BLOCK

WORK-ON



COMPETENCIES ASSESSED AS AN AREA TO WORK-ON AT THE HIGHEST
LEVEL OF COMPETITION, IN RELATION TO OTHER COMPETENCIES

LOW PRIORITY



COMPETENCIES ASSESSED AS A LOW PRIORITY FOR
THE NEXT COMPETITION AND TRAINING BLOCK

NOT APPLICABLE



THESE ARE EITHER NOT APPLICABLE OR TO BE SORTED AT A LATER DATE



MENTAL SKILLS[©]

— SORT CARDS —



Performance Focus

- I am able to maintain my focus on doing what I need to do during track work and racing.
- In adversity, under pressure or following unexpected events, I will:
 - Acknowledge my thoughts and feelings in the moment.
 - Use strategies to actively manage my emotions and reactions (e.g., self-talk, imagery, affirmations).
 - Focus on the process, not the outcome.
 - Continue to communicate (through words and actions) positively and effectively.
 - Maintain my confidence.
 - Make rational decisions.

Developing Performance Focus

Experiment with ways to stay calm, manage focus and eliminate distractions

Feeling stressed or anxious affects your focus. Set up situations in training where you could get distracted (e.g., under fatigue, situational pressure).

In these situations, practice different strategies to stay present, e.g., breathing control, imagery or visualisation, cue or focus words, and/or thought dumping/stopping.

Reflect on the consequences

Discuss with someone (a mentor or trainer) what the outcomes and impacts of losing your composure are.

Identify your triggers

Consider what triggers you away from focusing on the present. Build a plan to manage these, testing out how quickly you can refocus.

Key moment planning

Focus is having less in your mind. Use a journal to identify and plan your focus for key moments that may arise. Evaluate your focus during track work or other training activities as well.

Focus on what you can control

Draw a circle. Inside the circle write down everything about your race that is within your control. Next, write down everything that is outside of your control outside of the circle. Observe and review how much time you spend thinking and worrying about things outside of your control.

Become actively aware

Keep a journal/daily training diary in which you rate yourself every time you ride. Simple daily evaluations are critical to improving your focus.



Composure

- Cool under pressure.
- Does not become defensive or irritated when times are tough.
- Can be counted on to hold things together during tough times.
- Can handle stress.
- Is not knocked off balance by the unexpected.
- Doesn't show frustration when resisted or blocked.
- Continues to communicate positively and effectively under pressure.
- Maintains confidence.

Developing Composure

Reflect on the consequences

Discuss with someone (a mentor or trainer) the outcomes and impacts of losing your composure.

Experiment with ways to stay calm, manage focus and eliminate distractions

Feeling stressed or anxious affects your focus. Ask other jockeys what they do to manage their mood and focus and stay calm in high-pressure situations. Experiment with different strategies, e.g., breathing control, routines, music, mental imagery or visualisation, cue or focus words, perceptual positioning (NLP) and/or thought dumping/thought stopping.

'Key moment' planning

Performance preparation is key to maintaining composure (*see preparation card*).

Write down key moments that might arise and plan what you need to focus on at this time. Assess races where you have been super composed or times you have lacked composure, and reflect on what you were thinking.

'What if' planning

Brainstorm some 'what if' scenarios with a mentor or trainer and plan what reaction(s) you will have to each scenario so that you have pre-planned your responses.

Focus on what you can control

Draw a circle. Inside the circle write down everything about your races that is within your control/sphere of influence (e.g., your actions and attitudes). Next, write down everything that is outside of your control, outside of the circle. Observe and review how much time you spend thinking about and worrying about things on the outside.

Also, see performance focus card.



SELF Raise My Game[®]

— SORT CARDS —



Ownership of Development

- Sets goals. Is well organised, resourceful and well planned. Is almost always on time and prepared.
- Contributes to planning, decision-making and race reviews.
- Doesn't always rely on others, can problem solve. May have to be creative or brave in seeking support.
- Actively manages personal wellbeing, health and injuries.
- Communicates clearly and at the appropriate time with circle of support.

Developing Ownership of Development

Be resourceful and brave

On occasion you may need extra support for your programme or plans. Think about how you can use your circle of support or networks to help you. What steps would you take if you were more brave, more creative, or more resourceful?

Plan and be prepared

Set aside an hour at the start of your week to set goals and plan what you want to achieve e.g., what sessions are planned for the week? What organisation is required (e.g., recovery food shopping)? Consider allowing time for mental preparation or extras before or after each training session.

Review

Put in place a daily (or weekly) time to evaluate your efforts. You may prefer a training diary, wall chart, scrap book or mentor discussion. Seek feedback.

Consider the big questions

Ask yourself the big questions, the answers may reveal areas you can develop new understanding or processes:

- Why is your goal important to you?
- How do you remind yourself of the end goal?
- How are you measuring your success and celebrating each achievement or action taken towards your goal?
- How do you approach set-backs?
- Are you actively choosing your attitude?
- Have you got people helping you and keeping you honest?

Also, see health, women's health, robustness, nutrition, sleep and injury recovery cards.



Drive and Ambition

- Attacks everything with drive and energy.
- Drive and ambition comes from within.
- Ambitious.
- Committed.
- Has a good balance between long term development and race results now.
- Seeks out opportunities to improve through questioning, challenging ideas, and self-analysis.

Developing Drive and Ambition

The difference between interest and commitment

The saying goes... there is a difference between interest and commitment.

Interest is when you do something only when it is convenient for you, whereas when you are committed, you accept no excuses, only results. Examine the choices you are making... are you interested or are you committed? How would commitment look different?

Know your why

Why is your goal important to you?

Once you know your why, think about how you can remind yourself of it every day (e.g., an image on your phone).

Be unstoppable

Change your mindset from: 'I want to be successful', to: 'I want to be unstoppable'. This slight shift allows for the fact that there will be barriers and problems along the way that you will need to find solutions to.

Have a clear plan of action

Develop a clear step-by-step plan of action to achieve your goals and decide how you will measure and celebrate success.

Struggling with sticking to the plan?

Success relies on your ability to stick to the plan day-in-day-out. The answers to the following questions may reveal an area you can work on:

- How do you remind yourself of the end goal?
- How are you measuring your success and celebrating each achievement or action taken towards your goal?
- How do you approach set-backs?
- Are you actively choosing your attitude?
- Have you got people helping you and keeping you honest?



ATHLETE LIFE[®]

— SORT CARDS —



Managing Time and Energy

- Concentrates on the most important priorities.
- Has structure within each day.
- Uses a diary and/or calendar.
- Uses down time wisely to recharge my energy.
- Is OK with things outside of control.

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Managing my Time and Energy

Noticing when things are out of balance

When things get out of balance, you may start to feel stressed or anxious. Do you know what behaviours others would see that reflect a healthy or unhealthy balance? Reflect on your life balance weekly, and if you notice a series of low scores or downward trend over weeks, talk to someone trusted in your inner circle of support about what changes are needed.

Plan your down time

Look at your schedule, and plan when you have spare time that you could use. Think about how best you can use this time to refresh mentally and physically.

Set aside time to plan

Set aside time on a Sunday night to plan your week and then take 10 mins each morning to plan your priorities for the day.

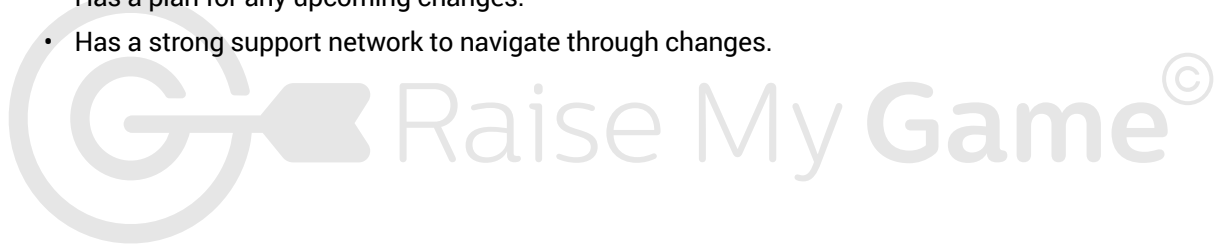
Managing priorities

Write a list of everything you have to do in priority order. Look down your list and draw a line between the things you 'have to do' and the things that you can delete, defer, or delegate. Now set about 'managing' the things below the line to move them off your short term 'to-do' list.



Future, Change, and Career Planning

- Has a plan for at least the next year (i.e., income source, living arrangements, race schedule, etc.).
- Has a plan for any upcoming changes.
- Has a strong support network to navigate through changes.



Tips for Future, Change and Career Planning

Building a network of support

- Make a list of the areas of your life you might need some help/support with (e.g. somewhere to live, finding a part-time job).
- Identify people in your current circle of support and ask them to make introductions to people who may be able to help you in these areas.
- Talk to other jockeys or apprentices who have followed a similar path, and ask them for help identifying people who may be useful connections during your change journey.
- Ask your employer, riding mentor or NZTR support network for any contacts or relationships they have that may help you through your change journey.

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HEALTH

SORT CARDS



Health

- Is consistently able to turn up to racing healthy and ready to go (no ongoing sickness or health challenges).
- Has self-care routines to maintain health.
- Will proactively see a GP or the NZTR medical doctor with any health concerns.
- Is able to manage health during travel.
- No addictions (i.e., drugs, alcohol, gambling).
- If sick or injured on race day, reports injuries or medical issues to the Chief Medical Officer, NZTR licensing and the RIB stewards.

Tips for Good Health

General health, addictions or mental health

If you have concerns, talk to someone in your trusted circle to support you to seek help from a GP, counsellor, or clinical psychologist.

Policy for hot conditions

Refer to the NZTR policy for horses and jockeys in hot conditions (i.e., temperature is above 30 degrees).

Sleep

If you are struggling with sleep, look at your sleep habits:

- Does your bedroom environment promote consistent, uninterrupted sleep?
- Do you have a stable sleep schedule?
- Is your bedroom comfortable and free of disruptions?
- Do you follow a relaxing pre-bed routine?
- Do you have healthy daily routines and habits that contribute to supporting your sleep?
- Do you know how much sleep you need?

Seek professional help if you are struggling with getting the right amount or quality of sleep.

Build your knowledge

Identify someone in your circle of support that will have access to research and specialist knowledge on specific approaches to subjects such as travel and heat.

Also, see women's health, sleep and nutrition cards.



Women's Health

- Understands the importance of menstrual cycles and the role hormones play in recovery, bone, and overall health.
- Is knowledgeable about menstruation and what is normal.
- Knows when to ask for help in relation to pain, bleeding, or other menstruation symptoms. Feels confident to be able to manage symptoms well.
- Can identify the key markers for menstrual health and knows who to contact if she notices any problems.
- Understands that contraception is a choice and is well-informed about the full range of choices available. Knows where to seek help, and has the information and support to make contraception decisions.
- Is aware of common female health issues such as premenstrual syndrome, dysmenorrhea (very painful menstruation), menorrhagia (very frequent or heavy menstruation, amenorrhea (not starting periods until after age 16 or missing more than three periods in a row), endometriosis, and polycystic ovarian syndrome.
- Has positive support from trainer/sport to talk about and manage women's health issues.

Tips for Women's Health

See your GP

Ask your GP or sports doctor for information on women's health issues related to sport. Did you know that endometriosis and polycystic ovarian syndrome affect around 10% of all women? Recent research has highlighted the prevalence of girl's and women's health concerns but also that they are under-recognised and under-reported. This means they are diagnosed late and the side effects and outcomes made worse. Don't put up with any negative symptoms which impact what you choose to do or how well you perform. Ask and seek support and help.

Support from your sport

If you have concerns about managing women's health issues in relation to racing or training expectations, talk to the NZTR doctor.

Managing your whole health is key to menstrual health

Wellbeing is a balance of social, emotional, physical and mental health and together they are key to your performance as a jockey. Your menstrual cycle is sensitive to imbalances in your health. Keeping a 'balance' is critical to your cycle and hormones.

Improve your menstrual health knowledge

Did you know that menstrual cycle hormones can affect metabolism, bone density, hydration, immune response, pain tolerance, body temperature, weight, muscle recovery, injury risk, mental health and many other aspects of health and performance? Get informed, and regain choice and power over your body.

Check out:

- HPSNZ website, WHISPA.
- Sport NZ balanced female health handbook and infographic, sportnz.org.nz/balanced-female-health.
- Australian Institute of Sport, female performance initiative.



PHYSICAL SKILLS[©]

— SORT CARDS —



Strength

- Has core strength to avoid injury and maintain balance and position.
- Has good upper body strength to push/hold the horse.
- Has leg strength to hold position and maintain balance.
- Has strength endurance.

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Developing Strength

Mimic the movement patterns for your sport

The purpose of a strength training program is to improve the movement patterns of a particular skill. If you have the help of a physio or biomechanist, a movement analysis will help you determine which muscles are being used to perform the movement patterns in your event.

Timing of sessions

Consider the timing of your strength sessions within your training week to allow for some recovery time for overloaded muscles.

Tailor your programme for you

Ensure your strength training is tailored specifically for you, taking into account your strengths and weaknesses, injury history and the physiological demands of your event.

Aim to match the physiological demands of your sport to your strength programme (e.g., length of a race).

Volume of track work

Learn and maintain strength through track work and jump outs.

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Recovery

- Recognises the importance of repair and recovery 24 hours post race and training. Has routines and processes that include:
 - Better/deeper and longer sleep
 - Nutrition:
 - Repair damaged muscles through immediate intake of protein.
 - Replenish energy stores with carbohydrate (see nutrition card).
 - Removes waste products from the body (through increasing blood circulation to get rid of lactate and adrenaline), through recovery sessions, such as:
 - Pool recovery
 - Ice baths (e.g., 5 mins at 10–13°) or alternatively contrast water immersion (hot/cold).
 - Sets aside time, and has processes to review and reset mentally and emotionally.

Developing Recovery Processes

Treat recovery sessions with equal importance

Plan your recovery just as you plan your other sessions in the week. Typical physical recovery sessions include pool recovery, stretching and ice baths. Typical mental recovery would include a competition debrief from a race psychology perspective.

Nutrition

The importance of recovery nutrition depends on the type and duration of exercise completed. The goal of recovery nutrition is to appropriately refuel and rehydrate the body, promoting muscle repair and growth. Plan your food intake and timing and get organised.

Also, see nutrition card.

Sleep

Sleep affects physical and mental performance as well as general health and well-being. Sleep is a major contributor to recovery and muscle regeneration.

- Does your bedroom environment promote consistent, uninterrupted sleep?
- Do you have a stable sleep schedule?
- Is your bedroom comfortable and free of disruptions?
- Do you follow a relaxing pre-bed routine?
- Do you have healthy daily routines and habits that contribute to supporting your sleep?
- Do you know how much sleep you need?

Seek professional help if you are struggling with getting the right amount or quality of sleep.

Also, see sleep card.

Mental recovery is important too

It is natural to be disappointed when you lose. How much impact does losing have on your confidence? Work hard to keep your review focused on execution of the process, not the outcomes. Video can help to ensure your assessment is accurate and fact-based, and not skewed by emotion. As the saying goes: “don’t let winning go to your head, don’t let losing get to your heart”.



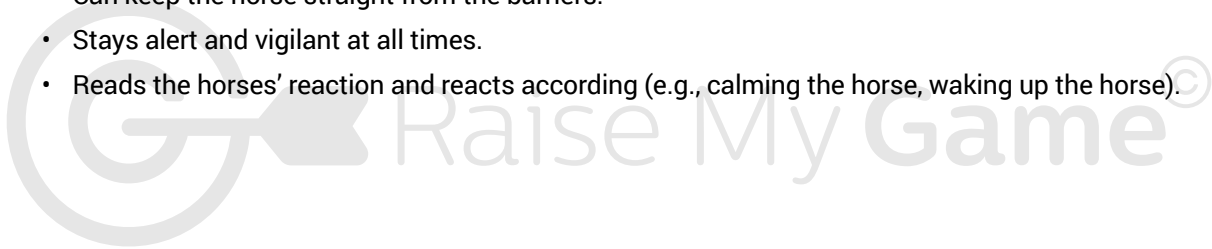
TECHNICAL SKILLS[®]

— SORT CARDS —



Jumping out of the Gates

- Jump out of the gates is balanced, efficient and well timed.
- Can keep the horse straight from the barriers.
- Stays alert and vigilant at all times.
- Reads the horses' reaction and reacts according (e.g., calming the horse, waking up the horse).



Developing Your Jump out of the Gates

Developing awareness

Be aware of the loading up process and be ready to go when the last horse is loaded.

Review trials with mentors

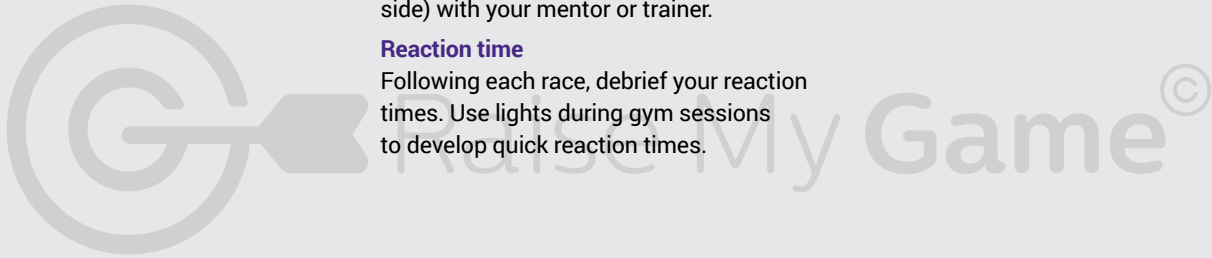
Debrief each trial or race (e.g., hold on the reins, balance is forward, back, or to the side) with your mentor or trainer.

Reaction time

Following each race, debrief your reaction times. Use lights during gym sessions to develop quick reaction times.

Pop-up to riding position

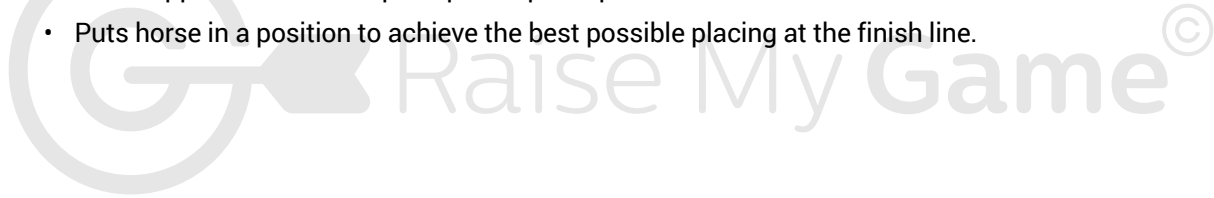
Review timing of pop-up as the horse leaves the barrier (i.e., not too early or too late).





Field Positioning

- Can position safely and effectively.
- Can maintain position.
- Takes opportunities that open up to improve position.
- Puts horse in a position to achieve the best possible placing at the finish line.



Developing Your Field Positioning

Following instructions

Follows trainers' instructions, but always has a plan B, and knows when to go to plan B.

Knowing opponents

Goes into races knowing opposition (incl. colours) and has a plan for which horses might be good to follow.

Race review

Debrief each race and review whether opportunities to improve position are safe and controlled (not erratic).





TACTICS

©

— SORT CARDS —



Race Plan

- Has reviewed race form and demonstrates tactical awareness of the competition and how it may affect the race plan.
- Has a clear race plan; seeks clarification if the plan is not clear.
- Understands and can apply the plan to all the stages of a race (i.e., jumping out, getting a position, holding a position and challenging for a better position).
- Is able to develop/provide input to create an optimal race plan based on the horses' past runs, temperament and characteristics.
- Can watch a race recording and give feedback on different tactics and riding styles.

Developing Race Plan

Race preparation

Review previous races of the horse you are riding and opposition races. Talk with your trainer about the race plan and tactics and any background information that might be helpful (e.g., gear changes).

Race debrief

Review your race with your mentor and/or trainer.





Decision-Making and Adaptability

- Demonstrates tactical awareness in race decision-making (i.e., is able to read a race and adapt tactics to optimise performance).
- Has developed natural/automatic reaction skills, taking action in a race to avoid interference, or any other breaches of the rules.
- Is able to deal with tactical problems in the correct manner (i.e., being boxed in or being in the wrong position, etc.).
- Can change tactics to plan B mid-race if needed (e.g., adjusting tempo to exploit weaknesses in opponents).
- Can adapt/vary tactics to suit different tracks and opponents.

Developing Decision-Making and Adaptability

Race preparation

Review previous races of the horse you are riding and opposition races. Talk with your trainer about the decision-making during the race.

Race debrief

Review your race with your mentor and/or trainer. How did you react to situations? What have you learnt for future races?

'What if' plans

Do you know what to do when things don't go to plan (e.g., a horse hanging, saddle slips, boxed in)? Discuss with your riding mentor how you should react when things go wrong.

