

VISION FOR CHANGE:

REFLECTING ON YOUR LEADERSHIP

From designing strategic campaigns and building lasting coalitions, to fundraising and managing staff and volunteers, executive directors are expected to have command of a wide-range of skills and demonstrate many facets of leadership. This tool helps you assess your leadership using the findings from Vision for Change, a report based on in-depth conversations with 17 diverse younger leaders focusing on what it takes to do their jobs and what is needed to make concrete change that will support their visions and help to build a stronger progressive infrastructure for all stakeholders.

PURPOSE OF THIS EXERCISE:

Each section of this tool highlights a set of skills or attributes that current executive directors and CEO's have identified as important keys to success and building blocks for greater social change and impact. These questions will help you identify areas where you are already strong and others where you have room to grow as you think about your leadership. They should be used as a starting point and as a basis for discussion, so think of this as an opportunity for reflection rather than a formal assessment.

HOPED-FOR OUTCOMES:

- A better understanding of where your leadership skills are strong and where you might focus more time developing.
- A plan for identifying colleagues and mentors who can reflect on this tool with you.
- Repeated reflection on your skills over time by re-using this tool every 3-6 months.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Leadership Skills

Leaders today have inspiring visions for large-scale change, including new methods for organizing, working across boundaries, and building scale. Their ideas of where they want to take their organizations' work are both wide-ranging and forward reaching.

Pick an answer for each set of questions below that reflects how you would rate your skills in each area.

Vision

#1. I AM ABLE TO DEFINE A VISION FOR MY WORK, ORGANIZATION, AND TEAM. I WORK COLLABORATIVELY TO DEVELOP THAT VISION. I WORK ACROSS DEPARTMENTS, TEAMS, AND FURTHER – WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS AND PROGRAMS – TO INFORM AND DEVELOP THE DIRECTION OF MY WORK.

- 1 Always** (expert in this area)
- 2 Often** (very skilled in this area, but could use support)
- 3 Sometimes** (not very skilled in this area, and could use some training)
- 4 Rarely/Never** (need training in this area)

Briefly explain your response:

Inspiration

#2. I CAN COMMUNICATE MY VISION AND THE VISION OF THE ORGANIZATION TO OTHERS. I AM COMFORTABLE TALKING TO FUNDERS AND OTHER SUPPORTERS ABOUT OUR VISION AND INVITING THEM INTO THE WORK.

- 1 Always** (expert in this area)
- 2 Often** (very skilled in this area, but could use support)
- 3 Sometimes** (not very skilled in this area, and could use some training)
- 4 Rarely/Never** (need training in this area)

Briefly explain your response:

Support

#3. I HAVE A MENTOR, COACH, PEER NETWORK, OR OTHER SOURCE OF SUPPORT IN PLACE THAT I USE TO PROCESS THE CHALLENGES I ENCOUNTER IN MY ROLE. I REGULARLY SHARE INFORMATION, SKILLS, AND SUPPORT WITH THESE NETWORKS. I HAVE OTHERS OUTSIDE MY ORGANIZATION WHO CAN HELP ME SOLVE PROBLEMS.

- 1 Always** (expert in this area)
- 2 Often** (very skilled in this area, but could use support)
- 3 Sometimes** (not very skilled in this area, and could use some training)
- 4 Rarely/Never** (need training in this area)

Briefly explain your response:

Management Skills

Many leaders express the need for better management skills as they seek to implement internal organizational changes to move towards their vision. However, the lack of hands-on management training and experience has left many directors feeling handicapped in their ability to run and grow their organization.

Pick an answer for each set of questions on the next page that reflects how you would rate your skills in each area.

Supervision

#4. I AM COMFORTABLE SUPERVISING OTHERS. I GIVE PEOPLE BOTH POSITION FEEDBACK AND FEEDBACK ON HOW TO IMPROVE THEIR WORK. MY STAFF HAS CLEAR, OBTAINABLE GOALS/OBJECTIVES. I CONDUCT REGULAR EVALUATIONS AND LET THEM KNOW IF THEY ARE OR ARE NOT MEETING EXPECTATIONS AND WHY. I KNOW HOW TO HELP THEM IMPROVE THEIR PERFORMANCE. (IF YOU ARE NOT YET A SUPERVISOR, THINK ABOUT THE WAY IN WHICH YOU SUPPORT COLLEAGUES TO DO THESE THINGS.)

- 1 Always** (expert in this area)
- 2 Often** (skilled at most, but not all of these things)
- 3 Sometimes** (skilled at some of these things, but not all and could use some training)
- 4 Rarely/Never** (need training in all these areas)

Briefly explain your response:

Team-building

#5. I CAN IDENTIFY THE RIGHT PERSON FOR A JOB OR TASK. I CAN SEE POTENTIAL IN OTHER STAFF WHO MAY NOT BE FULLY UTILIZED, AS WELL AS IDENTIFY GAPS IN THE SKILLS OF OTHERS. I CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR STAFF TO DEVELOP UNTAPPED POTENTIAL.

- 1 Always** (expert in this area)
- 2 Often** (very skilled in this area, but could use support)
- 3 Sometimes** (not very skilled in this area, and could use some training)
- 4 Rarely/Never** (need training in this area)

Briefly explain your response:

Administration

#6. I AM COMFORTABLE WITH ADMINISTRATION, INCLUDING SETTING BUDGETS AND TRACKING FINANCES, DEALING WITH HR ISSUES THAT MAY ARISE, AS WELL AS FOLLOWING REGULATIONS. I KNOW HOW TO MAKE ADJUSTMENTS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR IN RESPONSE TO NEW WORK OR PROJECTS.

- 1 Always** (expert in this area)
- 2 Often** (very skilled in this area, but could use support)
- 3 Sometimes** (not very skilled in this area, and could use some training)
- 4 Rarely/Never** (need training in this area)

Briefly explain your response:

Balancing Demands

Making large scale change requires mobilization of all your resources. But many leaders struggle with creating boundaries and balance that keep them in the work for the long haul.

Pick an answer for each set of questions below that reflects how you would rate your skills in each area.

Balance

#7. I SUCCESSFULLY BALANCE THE DEMANDS OF YOUR WORK AND PERSONAL LIVES. I DO NOT FEEL OVERWHELMED, AND AM RESPONSIVE TO THE SAME WORK/LIFE BALANCE NEEDS OF OTHERS.

- 1 Always** (completely balanced)
- 2 Often** (very balanced, but could use support)
- 3 Sometimes** (not very balanced, and could use some training)
- 4 Rarely/Never** (need support in this area)

Briefly explain your response:

Reflection

#8. I HAVE TIME AND SPACE TO REFLECT ON MY WORK AND THE DIRECTION I AM HEADED. I FEEL I HAVE TIME TO DO THE SAME FOR MY ORGANIZATION AND SHARE MY THINKING WITH OTHERS IN THE ORGANIZATION AND FIELD.

- 1 Always** (expert in this area)
- 2 Often** (very skilled in this area, but could use support)
- 3 Sometimes** (not very skilled in this area, and could use some training)
- 4 Rarely/Never** (need training in this area)

Briefly explain your response:

Pathways

#9. I CAN DESCRIBE WHERE I'D LIKE TO BE IN 5 YEARS, PERSONALLY AND PROFESSIONALLY, AND WHETHER OR NOT IT IS IN THE SAME ORGANIZATION OR EVEN THE SAME FIELD. I FEEL CONFIDENT THAT I HAVE A DEVELOPED PLAN FOR HOW TO GET THERE AND KNOW THE SKILLS AND SUPPORT THAT I WILL NEED ALONG THE WAY.

- 1 Always** (know exactly where I'm headed and can identify the path there)
- 2 Often** (have a sense of where I'm headed, but could use help figuring out how to get there)
- 3 Sometimes** (not sure where I'm headed, and could use some assistance figuring that out)
- 4 Rarely/Never** (no idea where I'm headed)

Briefly explain your response:

Next Steps

Fill in your answers using the chart on the following page and reflect on the accompanying questions. Save your answers to reflect on in the future as you use this tool over again. Try to identify colleagues or partners who can participate in your reflection on these issues.

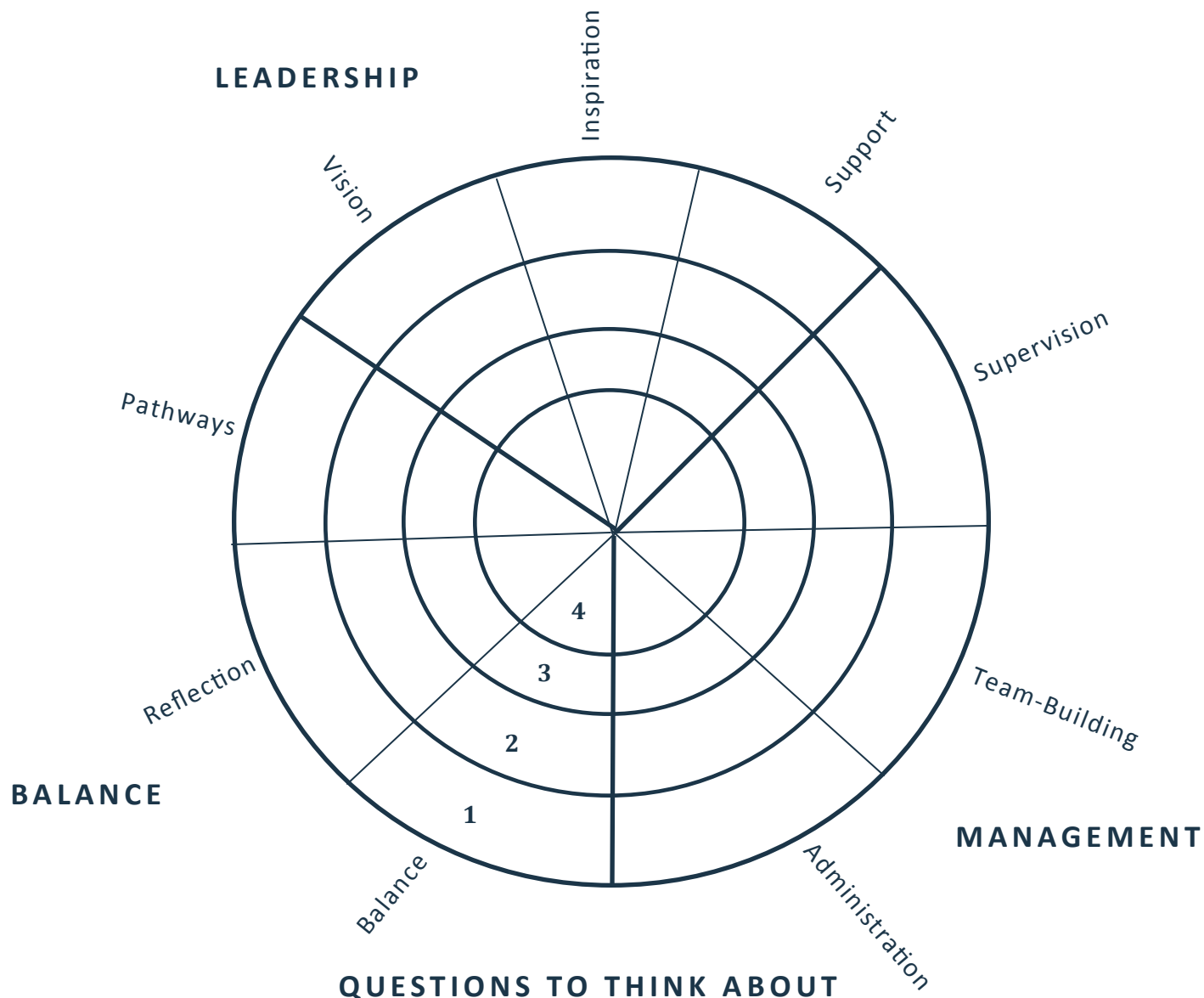
REFLECTING ON YOUR LEADERSHIP

Worksheet

DATE FILLED IN: _____

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Fill in each slice to the level of your answer.
 1 Always 2 Often 3 Sometimes 4 Rarely/Never
- Use "Questions to think about" below to explore and interpret your responses.



- Which areas do I need to focus on more? (the smaller pieces of the pie)
- What changes do I see from the last time I filled this in?
- What caused those changes?
- What are my goals moving forward?

