



ASSESSES REALITY

Growing Leaders Starter Toolkit

DEFINITION – Applies acumen to accurately assess the current situation.

*Overfunctioning – two thirds of weakness is the overuse or misuse of strength. Overfunctioning occurs when one’s talent, skill, or knowledge causes problems for you or others.

[=] SKILLED	[-] UNSKILLED	[+] OVERFUNCTIONING*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Builds relational and systematic methods for staying informed of future policies, trends, technology, and information affecting their work and organization. • Has a sense of history around the topic, project, or system. • Prayerfully discerns spiritual and emotional dynamics around the topic, project or system. • Is aware of many perspectives and biases and learns from them when interpreting reality, including race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, and geography. • Can name both quantitative and qualitative data about a project or system, and then interpret and apply data objectively and accurately. • Gathers perspective by garnering the insight and skills from experts and stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is too optimistic or pessimistic about current reality. • Lacks ability to name factors working for or against the organization or specific initiatives. • Has limited historical knowledge to accurately analyze current reality. • Relies too much on instinct. • Assumes they know the whole reality without <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ talking with others. ○ understanding larger organizational factors. ○ looking at different interpretations of reality. • Does not listen well. • Cannot make predictions or good next steps • Makes major decisions based on small data samples or only anecdotal information. • Hyper-spiritualizes discernment process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spends too much time analyzing current reality and fails to act at the appropriate time. • Is unable to blend assessing reality with other leadership competencies. • Is over-confident about current reality. • Focuses on current problems that stall creative decision-making efforts. • Over-focuses on previous narratives surrounding systems, preventing adoption of new solutions.

Related Competencies: Building Teams

EXAMPLES IN INTERVARSITY

- Annual Reports (AFR, FFR)
- Stories from stakeholders
- SWOT analysis
- Needs assessments
- Quantitative and qualitative surveys post events
- “Spying out the land” for planting
- Industry comparisons

- Internal data systems
- Performance appraisals/reviews
- Self-assessment tools (Leadership 2.0, Emotional Intelligence, Strengths Finder, Cultural Intelligence, etc.)

SUGGESTED RESOURCES

Primary

- Heifetz, Ronald and Marty Linsky. "Get on the Balcony." Chap. 3 in *Leadership on the Line: Staying Alive Through the Dangers of Leading*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business Review Press, 2002.
- Morse, MaryKate. "The Law of the Jungle." Chap. 6 in *Making Room for Leadership: Power, Space, and Influence*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2008.

Secondary

- Collins, Jim. "Confront the Brutal Facts (Yet Never Lose Faith)." Chap. 4 in *Good to Great*. New York, NY: Harper Business, 2001.
- Hyun, Jane. "The Latest Trends in Corporate Diversity Training." Chap. 3 in *Breaking the Bamboo Ceiling*. New York: Harper Business, 2005.
- Khang, Kathy. "Seen but Not Heard." Chap. 1 in *Raise Your Voice: Why We stay Silent and How to Speak Up*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2018.
- Sandberg, Sheryl. "The Leadership Ambition Gap." Chap. 1 in *Lean In: Women, Work and the Will to Lead*. New York, NY: Alfred Knopf, 2013.
- Cowan, Hallie. "Prayer Walk on Campus." Accessed March 6, 2020.
<https://learningandtalent.intervarsity.org/spiritual-formation-prayer/prayer-training/prayer-walk-campus>
- Lewin's Force Field Model (Change Management). Accessed March 6, 2020.
<https://www.tutor2u.net/business/reference/models-of-change-management-lewins-force-field-model>

SUGGESTIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Assessing Reality is a context specific skill. You may be great at assessing reality in finances but lack the skill to assess team dynamics. You can practice using a tool to assess reality in any context.

- Complete a Lewins Force Field Analysis to assess opportunities and challenges of a project.
- Interview stakeholders to assess needs.
- Seek coaching/mentoring in discernment or assessment of a specific area you need to develop.
- Create a SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats).
- Conduct surveys for those inside and outside the task.
- Complete Cultural Intelligence assessments to develop discernment around cultural dynamics.
- Complete an Emotional Intelligence assessment to develop discernment around personal and group dynamics.

BENEFITS FOR 2030 CALLING

- Helps assess opportunities for planting and growing work.
- Assesses potential in volunteers, staff, students, etc.
- Removes confirmation biases, by including more people in the conversation.
- Helps think about the whole organization.
- Promotes inclusion by including often marginalized voices.
- Retains talent by exploring realities that can make staff difficult for some.