



**ASSESSES REALITY**  
*Growing Leaders Starter Toolkit*

**DEFINITION** – Gathers and analyzes relevant facts and data to discern reality within one’s scope of responsibility.

\*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.

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

**EXAMPLES IN INTERVARSITY**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual Reports (AFR, FFR)</li> <li>• Stories from stakeholders</li> <li>• SWOT analysis</li> <li>• Needs assessments</li> <li>• Quantitative and qualitative surveys post events</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Spying out the land” for planting</li> <li>• Industry comparisons</li> <li>• Internal data systems</li> <li>• Performance appraisals/reviews</li> <li>• Self-assessment tools (Leadership 2.0, Emotional Intelligence, CliftonStrengths Assessment, etc.)</li> </ul> |
|--|--|

## SUGGESTED RESOURCES

### Primary

- Heifetz, Ronald and Marty Linsky. "Get on the Balcony." Chap. 3 in *Leadership on the Line: Staying Alive Though the Dangers of Leading*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business Review Press, 2002.

### Secondary

- Collins, Jim. "Confront the Brutal Facts (Yet Never Lose Faith)." Chap. 4 in *Good to Great*. New York, NY: Harper Business, 2001.

## 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 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.
- Reduces confirmation biases, by including more people in the conversation.
- Helps think about the whole organization and all aspects of work.
- Retains talent by exploring realities that can make staff difficult for some.