

# Developing Yourself as a CAC Leader

Lessons and Insights from the Leadership Exchange and Coaching Project (LEC)

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As co-principal of QUAD2 Consulting, she conducted, with Weiss Associates, the initial stage of the 2004 NCA strategic planning process using Appreciative Inquiry. For the ABA Center on Children and the Law, she was a consultant on evaluating recorded forensic interviews and children’s testimony, developing data instruments and providing training from 2006-10. In 2006-07, she was the Principal Investigator for the Essex County NJ Prosecutor’s Office **Evaluation of the Effectiveness and Use of Videotaped Recording of Child Victim Testimony in the Investigation and Prosecution of Child Abuse Criminal Cases**.

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## Introduction

CAC Executives and Managers must exercise a dizzying array of skills and competencies - technical, organizational and interpersonal. All these play out in organizations that sit at the nexus of a unique public-private milieu of stakeholders and partners laboring/learning to collaborate. NCA, Regional CACs and Chapters provide considerable technical training in financial management, standards and the work of investigating, interviewing and healing, as well as Leadership training.

Since 2005, the Northeast Regional Children's Advocacy Center has offered a different take on leadership enhancement – the Leadership Exchange and Coaching Project (LEC). A small-group, two-year experiential program designed and led by Martha Lask, MSOD, in conjunction with recently retired Northeast Regional Director Anne Lynn, LEC is based on a core set of materials and concepts which address obvious position requisites as well as more subtle interpersonal/organizational Leadership proficiencies.

No manual alone can ever provide the rich experience, the unique expert coaching and the peer support that LEC provides. However, this carefully chosen set of written resources that underlie or reflect LEC can inspire self-discovery and new ways of generating connection with staff and partners. NRCAC's goal is to give a wider group of CAC Leaders and managers new perspectives and tools to:

- 1) Lead from their own strengths in all arenas;
- 2) Use deep and active listening and questioning techniques to interact more efficiently and effectively, and;
- 3) Function more purposefully as Leaders and alliance-developers within complex organizations and essential partnerships without overburdening themselves with too much obligation.

CAC Leaders can conduct their own **self-directed course of leadership development**, or **create their own small peer learning and/or support group**, based on this set of proven concepts and resources that have been invaluable for the more than one hundred CAC Executives who have completed the LEC Project. Some CAC Leaders may be moved to participate in LEC, or to be mentored by LEC participants in some future cycle.

This serves as a guide to selected, accessible and available texts, tools and ideas that encapsulate many of the fundamental principles of LEC and form the building blocks of a CAC leadership development self-study course. It is organized in a functional progression such that the reader will first appraise her/his own competency patterns within the array of professional requisites, then determine what powerful strengths can be summoned to address the challenges. The reader will then discover two different but allied methods of inquiry and process that will deepen and re-energize all kinds of encounters and gatherings. Finally, the eager learner will explore two schemes for diagnosing and skillfully addressing systems issues that are common within CACs. **Acquire, read and work through the actual resources, whether book or on-line pdf, to fully understand each building block.** References for the sections described below will be found both in each unit and at the end.

The Foundation of the guide is the **CAC Leadership Competencies Assessment**, a catalogue of competencies which comprise the job of the CAC Leader in its ideal. The 27 competencies are arranged in five categories: **Leading Change, Leading People, Building Coalitions and Communication, Driving Results** and **Demonstrating Business Acumen**. Surveyed CAC Executives have suggested which individual competencies rank at the very top for CAC success: Team Building, Vision, Strategic Thinking, Resilience and Flexibility, Partnering, Child-centered Service, and Interpersonal Skills. While CAC Execs must function in all domains, it is unlikely that all the skills and qualities in the catalogue come easily to any one individual. Leaders need to know where they excel and where they want to grow, according to their own assessments and those of others.

Then the guide turns to **Building Block I: Strengths**, in order to equip CAC Leaders to plan how best to lead towards any goal from their own strengths and maximize the strengths of others. Other staff or team members can bring their own strength domains to bear as balance and completion of the strengths of the Executive and within the MDT. **The only process that can support innovation and beneficial problem-solving in teams is recognizing and maximizing strengths in oneself and others, and then building on them.**

The next two components describe two revolutionary ways of thinking, interacting and working with individuals and groups. **Building Block II: Appreciative Inquiry (AI)**, is a theory and a process developed by David Cooperrider, practiced around the world, but fairly simple in concept. It is a way of asking questions and setting up interactions that seeks the best in any person, team or organization and then amplifies that to implement positive change. Similarly, **Building Block III: The Thinking Environment** is Nancy Kline's treatise on active listening, witnessing, and authenticity that blends seamlessly with Appreciative Inquiry. The Thinking Environment is one in which people (and oneself) individually and in groups can carefully and without interruption ponder problems and move faster to better solutions.

The next two blocks are schematic concepts for evaluating system crossroads and then planning helpful leadership responses. **Block IV: Seeing Systems**, the work of Barry Oshry, elucidates and inoculates against patterns that are predictable and inherent in the different contexts in which we find ourselves working – **Tops, Middles** and **Bottoms** – that quickly become dysfunctional and prevent partnering creatively with each other. **Block V: Influence Without Power In Partnerships**, provides clear instructions for expanding influence and setting and bartering partnership objectives. It can be argued that having and leading from influence doesn't require role authority as much as one might think.

Finally, **Block VI: Peer Consultation and Support** includes some initial ideas for growing some of the peer support essential to maintaining oneself in a CAC Executive position. Overall, CAC Leaders can marshal new insight and pride in their own unique leadership styles, and incorporate refurbished tools for the work.

## **Foundation: Leadership Competencies for CAC Executive Directors**

All the experience of LEC suggests that CAC Leaders need a wide range of competencies, both basic and high level management skills. Obviously, CAC Leaders need the operational skills to run their own agencies, but also to work extensively on team building and form essential partnerships with their MDT and other stakeholders. CAC Execs need to hold and promote the vision of a uniquely child-centered, collaborative service. In addition, CAC Leaders need social competencies on a par with what international business executives need -- the ability to navigate varied cultures, in this case the ethos of their diverse communities and their multidisciplinary stakeholders instead of other nations.

### **Leadership Competency Assessments**

Leadership competency constructs are lattices of practiced skills, natural abilities, planned or reflexive behaviors and actions that interact and overlap. They are a mix of qualities one possesses and things one does in the workplace, both hard and soft skills. Together they shape leaders who can steer and motivate excellent organizations. Organizations want to understand what competencies are required for particular positions and teams so that they can hire the right people, provide skill-building for people to advance, and assess staff reputations among co-workers. In addition, competency catalogues are valuable for individuals who want to target future training and self-development in the areas they feel the need to strengthen.

There are a variety of competency schema available for use in the business world, some proprietary and expensive, and others in the public domain or published in journals. Some include five or six different general categories of competencies, each with a subset of more specific and defined abilities underneath. Others are stated in terms of one key leadership quality or shorter punch lists of qualities. Writing on the **Psychology Today** website, Ronald Riggio (2014) tagged **Social Intelligence** as the first of his top ten leadership competencies. He defines Social Intelligence as “understanding of social situations and dynamics and ability to operate effectively in a variety of social situations.” His list then proceeds to highlight: Interpersonal skills, Emotional Intelligence, Prudence, Courage, Conflict Management, Decision Making, Political Skills, Influence Skills and Area Expertise. Daskal (2003) proposes a dozen qualities of great leaders. According to her findings, great leaders: create vision, provide support and motivation, supply strategy and clarity, are tactical and flexible, build collaborative communities, leverage diversity and appreciate talent, develop others and encourage them to be more, are focused and responsible, are ethical and trustworthy, are masters and lifelong learners, are committed, and are accountable and decisive.

### **A CAC Leadership Competencies Assessment**

LEC has worked for many years to articulate the sweeping range of competencies that CAC Executives employ to build and lead the agency and the collaborations that comprise CACs. LEC has developed its own **CAC Leadership Competencies Assessment** (attached) that pertains specifically to leaders of CACs.

This tool can help CAC Leaders assess their own range of skills, celebrate their own strengths and reveal areas to be addressed. It can also help assess a CAC Leader's standing within her/his organization when used as a 360° assessment tool (data gathered from the individual, and then those above, beside and below in an organizational structure). This 360° could also be used to assess and build the strengths of a particular intact team within an organization.

The **CAC Leadership Competencies Assessment** contains five categories of competencies: **Leading Change, Leading People, Building Coalitions and Communication, Driving Results** and **Demonstrating Business Acumen**. There are in fact a number of personal qualities spread among the other categories that could be pulled together into their own category, **Managing Self**: among them are creativity, continual learning, resilience and flexibility, integrity/honesty and interpersonal skills.

Most published competency assessments are assembled empirically on evidence or opinions collected from the business world regarding those skills needed for particular positions or levels of leadership. LEC's tool was modified from an assessment developed by the US Office of Personnel Management and in the public domain. The government tool was based on empirical input, is similar to other business Leadership models and is still in wide use in various federal departments. While clearly grounded in that original empirical model, the LEC tool was not based on significant research but rather on opinion sought from the CAC world; nor has it yet been statistically normed for the unique CAC environment. It is still a work in progress, and thus ***should never be used in and of itself as a performance measure or a rigid hiring framework***. Rather its extensive list of functions and skills could help CAC Leaders assess their own strengths and growth areas; and could aid organizations in framing hiring criteria, forging specific performance agreements for individuals or teams and planning training topics.

### **Use of the Assessment with CAC Leaders**

LEC has been using this 360° Leadership Competencies Assessment since 2009. It has now been completed by and for 105 LEC participants; 26 of those participants completed the 360° a second time approximately 18 months later during their Mentoring year. Via Survey Monkey®, the assessment has been completed by 632 respondents whose names and email addresses were submitted to NRCAC by each participant. The surveys requested that respondents record their names so they could be tracked, but the identities and scores of those who responded were always kept confidential from the subject participant and NRCAC. The LEC Evaluator alone analyzed survey results and prepared reports and graphs for each LEC participant, displaying average scores only and non-identified written comments.

Feedback on the 360° tool has been very positive; on an embedded evaluation question on the tool itself, respondents overwhelmingly felt that it effectively captured the extensive set of competencies needed for a CAC Executive job. Some respondents commented that they interacted with their CAC Executive in some but not all areas, so could not rate their CAC Leader on certain questions, most commonly business acumen.

Many LEC participant Leaders understandably felt anxious about receiving this kind of feedback from those they work with. With the small number of respondents (an average of 6 respondents per participant), clearly one unhappy person could lower the average ratings, and this did happen a few times. Nevertheless, every single LEC participant was rated by their group of respondents as “Meets Expectations or above” in every category of the 360° assessment. Overall, the average of respondent ratings was 12% higher than the participants’ self-assessments.

***Facilitator and Coach Martha Lask advised all LEC participants not to consider the 360° assessment as definitive for all time, but rather as a snapshot that may present valuable information about areas that could be strengthened.*** She scheduled coaching sessions to process the results of the 360° shortly after participants received their reports. She encouraged each participant to engage their respondents in discussions of the Leadership Competencies Assessment, even without participant knowledge of which nominated respondents completed the assessment or what their individual ratings were.

### **Results of Brief Survey on the Competency Assessment**

In 2015, NRCAC sent a survey about CAC competencies to 79 LEC participants, all of those whose emails could still be found, both the majority who are still active in the CAC movement as well as those who have moved to other positions. More than half (40 of 79) completed the survey. Participants, most of whom had taken the 360°, were asked to rank the categories of competencies by their importance to CAC Executive leadership and to select the top individual competencies.

Those leaders surveyed ranked **LEADING PEOPLE** as the top category by a wide margin; that category includes these competencies:

- Conflict Management** (managing and resolving conflict in positive ways)
- Cultural Awareness** (changing culture to increase collaboration, valuing diversity)
- Team Building** (fostering cooperation, commitment)
- Integrity/Honesty** (instilling trust and creating an ethical culture)
- Supporting** (Listening nonjudgmentally and encouraging feedback) and
- Challenging** (driving analysis deeper)

Ranked second was **BUILDING COALITIONS/COMMUNICATION**, which includes these competencies:

- Oral Communication** (speaking convincingly, listening effectively)
- Written Communication** (writing in clear and organized style)
- Influencing/Negotiation** (persuading others, building consensus, win-win)
- Partnering** (building alliances, leveraging contacts, finding common ground)
- Political and Social Savvy** (identifying key trends, perceiving realities clearly, acting diplomatically)
- Interpersonal Skills** (responding appropriately and tactfully to others’ needs and feelings)

Asked to select the top individual competencies irrespective of category, CAC Leaders emphasized seven that stood above all others.

- 1. Team Building** (fostering cooperation, commitment)
- 2. Vision** (building shared vision, catalyzing change)

3. Tied were:
  - Strategic Thinking** (analyzing and planning effectively for long term)
  - Resilience and Flexibility** (maintaining, adapting, adjusting, recovering)
  - Partnering** (building alliances, leveraging contacts, finding common ground)
  - Child-centered Service** (anticipating and meeting needs of children while balancing all interests)
7. **Interpersonal Skills** (responding appropriately and tactfully to others' needs and feelings)

This short list, with the addition of the business management competencies necessary to running an agency, could be used as a brief self-assessment or employment interviewing plan. This guide presents approaches which can strengthen each of these competencies.



## **Building Block I: Strengths**

**Strength Based Leadership: Great Leaders, Teams, and Why People Follow**, by Tom Rath and Barry Conchie, 2008, Gallup Press, New York, New York.

### **Lessons about Leadership: Know your Strengths**

Leaders lead in different ways based on their personalities and unique sets of strengths, and few leaders have robust strengths in all areas. ***What is crucial is to know your own strengths and leverage them,*** and then to balance and correlate with the strengths of your staff and team. For many years, each LEC participant has completed one of the Gallup StrengthsFinders, the culmination of years of research into human personality. The more recent edition, **Strength Based Leadership** (Rath and Conchie, 2008), has added the leadership dimension to the 34 individual strengths now organized into four domains of leadership strength: **Executing, Influencing, Relationship Building** and **Strategizing**.

Buy this book and take the leadership survey on-line; it may change your life. Most LEC participants were amazed to learn that they had qualities that were cast in this book as powerful leadership strengths they could capitalize on. They also learned to reframe as strengths what they always thought of as personality quirks or even weaknesses. ***When recognized and embraced, any constellation of strengths can be harnessed to lead effectively.***

Rath and Conchie's (2008) introduction lists three powerful lessons about leadership drawn from expert review of thousands of interviews with senior leaders and many studies of work teams.

1. "The most effective leaders are always investing in strengths" – that is the strengths of themselves and their employees; focusing on weaknesses just demoralizes everyone, while focusing in strengths increases self-confidence
2. "The most effective leaders surround themselves with the right people and then maximize their team" – that is, the best teams have strengths in all four domains, but those are never all embodied in any given individual.
3. "The most effective leaders understand their followers' needs." (Rath and Conchie, 2008, p. 3)  
Those basic needs are: **Trust, Compassion, Stability** and **Hope**.

### **Four Domains**

Rath and Conchie (2008) have divided the traditional Gallup catalogue of empirically determined strengths into four domains of leadership strength:

**Executing** – making things happen, tirelessly implementing

**Influencing** – speaking up to sell the ideas

**Relationship Building** - creating groups and teams, the glue that holds teams together

**Strategizing** – absorbing information and helping make good decisions

This sounds quite similar to the other competencies assessments, and in fact these domains do correlate with the CAC Competencies Assessment, though there are subtle variations in individual elements.

CAC Competencies Assessment	Strength Based Leadership
Leading Change	Strategic Thinking
Leading People	Relationship Building
Building Coalitions and Communication	Influencing
Driving Results	Executing
Demonstrating Business Acumen	Executing

In the Gallup model, each leader will display **five top strengths** that can reveal and define a **Personal Leadership Style**. Working to excel in all domains is less likely to be effective than amplifying the power of natural strengths one already has. Leaders do have to function in all the domains, but can pilot much more effectively and *less exhaustingly* by leading with their strengths to address all competency domains. Surrounding her/himself with staff and team members who do have strengths in other domains can round out the picture.

**No domain is more important than any others in this structure, because leading from unique strengths is the message of the book.** The book describes four very successful business leaders who lead from strengths that lie heavily in one domain. There are additional rich resources in the book instructing how to lead with each of the particular strengths that one has, and how to lead others via their strengths.

### StrengthsFinder Results

Once one completes the **StrengthsFinder** on-line, the company not only prints out five top strength themes but also reprints relevant portions of the book guide - a detailed discussion of how to lead from one's own strengths. The entire chart is below, labels added to chart in Rath and Concie, 2008, p. 24.

Domains	EXECUTING – make things happen	INFLUENCING – sell the ideas	RELATIONSHIP BUILDING – be the glue	STRATEGIC THINKING – analyze to make better decisions
StrengthsFinder Strengths	Achiever	Activator	Adaptability	Analytical
	Arranger	Command	Developer	Context
	Belief	Communication	Connectedness	Futuristic
	Consistency	Competition	Empathy	Ideation
	Deliberative	Maximizer	Harmony	Input
	Discipline	Self-assurance	Includer	Intellection
	Focus	Significance	Individualization	Learner
	Responsibility	Woo	Positivity	Strategic
	Restorative		Relator	

One might think that Executing skills would be the **most** valuable for a leader to possess. Executors get things done; they work hard to make any plan happen. Executing skills would correlate closely to the Driving Results section of the LEC 360°. But Rath and Concie (2008) make the point brilliantly *that a leader can, in fact, lead from any strength domain*, and they proceed to suggest exactly how to do that.

For each strength, they advise how to accomplish the four key effects that encourage people to follow: building **trust**, showing **compassion**, providing **stability**, creating **hope**. It takes some study to begin to understand what each of these strengths is, because some of the tags are grammatically inconsistent, more jargon and less obvious than others, e.g. “Woo,” “Ideation,” “Maximizer,” “Restorative.”

### **Selected Strengths Surprisingly called Leadership**

The book itself is jam-packed with wisdom, but here we highlight just a few strengths whose potential muscle has often surprised LEC participants. People may be well aware that they have these characteristics, but are surprised to learn how valuable they are for leading organizations.

In Influencing, **Woo** is the love of “meeting people and winning them over” (Rath and Concie, p. 233). The usually gregarious Leaders with **Woo** can build trust with charm, optimally the kind of charm that shows real caring, and then create broad and useful social networks of key people they relate to and call on regularly. With the strength of **Woo** comes the responsibility to learn to build compassionate relationships on a deeper level than the surface relationships that comes so easily; having **Empathy** helps. Others feel assurance from the established wide network of resources, and the Leader with **Woo** can share rich information. The very presence of a person with **Woo** brings warmth and excitement to teams, and that stimulation sparks people to work together better.

In Relationship Building, the **Includer** believes that everyone should belong (Rath and Concie, 2008, p. 183). A leader with this inclusive strength respects and welcomes everybody. The **Includer** never allows anyone to feel left out, and gets to know anyone new to the organization or team. The **Includer** can inspire people to feel a part of something large and important, and can bring an environment of security by removing that almost universal dread of rejection. **Includers** can push others on their team to pull outsiders in and expand their own horizons.

In Relationship Building, **Positivity** is optimism unabated (Rath and Concie, 2008, p. 287). A leader with **Positivity** is free with praise, but needs to take care not to praise too much or ingenuously. **Positivity** is fun to be around, and can inject daylight into the inevitable dark times. A leader with **Positivity** can build self-assurance in others, and can overcome perfectionism that might stop progress with sheer enthusiasm for what lies ahead.

In Relationship Building, **Adaptability** is coping and adjusting to reality (Rath and Concie, 2008, p. 111). **Not** controlling but participating with people in their confusion can create trust and self-confidence in their ability to do what is necessary. Leaders with **Adaptability** can attend to others’ emotions and present

needs, help reassure apprehension just by being with people where they are. Staying supple, bendable and forbearing helps the team keep at it and move on, whereas more commanding managers might just give up in frustration.

In Strategic Thinking, the **Learner** is a continuous improver, lapping up knowledge perpetually (Rath and Concie, 2008, p. 199). A **Learner** leader may have to be careful always to respect others' expert wisdom and not compete. **Learners** can stimulate discovery in the whole organization by inviting others to learn with them, nurturing a culture of learning, and investing in others' education. Staff and team members flourish when they have opportunities to learn more, and can grow closer in the shared process.

### Leading from any Domain

Through a series of compelling vignettes about successful people, Rath and Concie (2008) describe strong leaders who lead their teams from dominance in each of the strength domains (and by implementing Strengths-based practices with their teams). While it may seem more likely that a dominant **Executor** has more natural ability to make momentous things happen, not so; **every dominant theme can be just as powerful if the individual plans how to lead from strengths**. For instance, a strong **Influencer** focused unrelentingly on improving customer experience and loyalty in the hospitality industry, mobilizing his **Woo** and **Maximizer** strengths to tap into and deepen the emotional experiences of customers (Rath and Concie, 2008, p. 41).

A bank manager with strength in Relationship Building built the organization by broadening connections and communicating very openly throughout the organization (Rath and Concie, 2008, p. 49). His **Futuristic** strength from the Strategic Thinking domain also led him to plan long-term for changes in the market years down the road. A third CEO transformed an entire business model leading with his robust strengths in Strategic Thinking (Rath and Concie, 2008, p. 59). He tirelessly researched ways of doing business in other industries and foresaw how they could be applied to his niche in future years. His **Connectedness** in the Relationship Building theme clearly helped him build strong teams that could function well even as he traveled the world exploring for ideas. These stories may be a bit off-putting in their soaring descriptions of success, but careful reading may reveal some compelling insights about how to plan a unique approach to leadership from one's own map of strengths.

### Maximizing a Team

There is a section on maximizing a team in **Strengths Based Leadership** which describes the qualities of great teams. It isn't immediately clear just how much of this applies to the cross-organizational teams that need to be built and continuously refortified in a CAC environment. Rath and Concie (2008) present Gallup findings over the years of the best qualities of high-performing teams: they don't founder on conflict because they focus on results; they prioritize the good of the organization; their members balance their lives; they embrace diversity; they attract good talent. All wonderful qualities, but how can these be created in teams that are made up of representatives, sometimes reluctant representatives, of a variety of different agencies and organizations both public and private?

***No one can force people to function as a well-oiled team, but one can ignite their ingenuity and feed their interests.*** Obviously it is important to start by clarifying the vision and tasks of the team, and to reiterate and preach on those regularly. Building Blocks II and III below address new ways of igniting and interacting with individuals and teams. CAC Leaders can also bring to bear all the partnering and currency exchange skills described in Building Block V below, the “Influence without Power” section of this guide.

But Rath and Concie’s answer would be to ***recognize the strengths of each member, encourage and use those strengths, and then recruit people with the categories of strengths that may be faint or missing.*** While it might be ideal for each prospective team member to complete the actual strengths inventory, some strengths can be observed, intuited or mined in conversation. For instance, if there are few, if any, on the MDT who bring strong Relationship-building skills, then it may be helpful to recruit some particular people who are **Connectors** or **Harmonizers** or have **Woo** or **Positivity**. If Strategic Thinking skills seem to be missing, then the team may have trouble accurately analyzing and tactically planning. Enlist some **Analyticals** and **Learners**, who will have a lot of useful thoughts and plans to contribute. If there are too many controlling managers who get frustrated by process, try bringing in some partners who demonstrate the **Adaptability** that reassures and helps the team keep at the tasks for the long run. CAC Leaders are accustomed to pursuing full representation of professions and core agencies; recruiting for personal **strengths** may be a novel and fruitful approach.

## **Building Block II: Appreciative Inquiry**

**Appreciative Inquiry Handbook: The First in a Series of AI Workbooks for Leaders of Change**, by David Cooperider, Diana Whitney, and Jacqueline M. Stavros, 2005, Crown Custom Publishing, Inc., Brunswick, OH.

### **The Theory and the Process**

Over the many years of LEC, participants have always agreed that the most important and valuable new method they learned to apply is Appreciative Inquiry (AI). Many participants have described how internalizing and using AI has helped them, and helped their staff and partners, to make the leap from non-stop grouching about the very real problems of designing multi-agency practice **towards constructive inspiration and better collaboration. CAC Leaders learned that doing more of what works, and using the stimulus of what people are most proud of, can unlock more creative solutions.** All LEC participants have practiced appreciative questioning to great success.

Appreciative Inquiry is a theory and a process developed by David Cooperider, and is now a world-wide movement. The Preface of the particularly useful **Appreciative Inquiry Handbook** describes AI as a “form of transformational inquiry that “seeks to locate, highlight and illuminate the ‘life-giving’ forces of an organization’s existence” and then teaches “how to build and sustain an organization from the positive core” (Cooperider, Whitney et al., 2005, p. XIII). The theory is that “every organization has something that works right – things that give it life when it is most alive, effective, successful, and connected in healthy ways to its stakeholders and communities. AI begins by identifying what is positive and connecting to it in ways that heighten energy and vision for change (Cooperider, Whitney et al., 2005, p. XVII).” The way we design the questions is the secret to helping people discover the seeds of change and then inspire and implement that change. **Effective improvement can happen only when the people involved expand the positive core, feel good about each other and are excited about creating good things together.**

### **How to begin using AI: The Appreciative Interview**

AI can be applied in a fairly simple way without diluting its power; it doesn’t need to be a full-scale application of the complete inquiry method (the 4-D Cycle as described in the Handbook), although that would be useful in longer-term planning activities. **The genius of AI is that creating questions in an appreciative way sets a completely different tone in every setting, and the gift is that it builds relationships.** A system can move only in the direction of the inquiry, so intentionally setting the inquiry towards strengths can move things towards more strength.

The AI Handbook describes the very simple beginnings of an AI approach – doing an appreciative interview. In LEC, participant CAC Leaders interview each other. In CACs, this exercise can be done with staff, MDT and other stakeholders, and can be used in a wide range of meeting and workshop situations. People really enjoy the experience of an appreciative interview, and it doesn’t have to be steeped in the language of emotions for people to feel happy about the experience. The “Foundational Questions” that

can be adapted for any specific content are found on page 23 and again on page 45 of the AI Handbook. The facilitator starts with a preface about AI, which focuses on affirming things at their best, in order to express the positive core. People then split up into pairs or trios and each ask the questions of the other, **listening** carefully to the answers, and taking care not to inject their own thoughts while the speaker is talking; each person gets 15-20 minutes to answer the questions uninterrupted. The questions are:

1. “Describe a peak or high-point experience in your life - personal or professional.
2. *Without being modest*, what do you value most about yourself? your work? your organization?
3. What are the core factors that give life to your organization?” (Cooperider, Whitney et al., 2005, p. 24)

These three questions are often the first interview, with the next two visioning questions held for later. The visioning and implementation questions are the final steps of a complete AI Inquiry that will be useful in some settings.

4. “Imagine you have awakened from a long, deep sleep. You get up to realize that everything is as you always dreamed it would be. Your ideal state has become reality. What do you see? What is going on? How have things changed?
5. What three wishes do you have...to enhance the health and vitality of your organization?” (Cooperider, Whitney et al., 2005, p. 24).

For CACs, the questions can be rewritten to reflect the group structure at hand. For instance, in a multidisciplinary team, a multi-agency investigative team or a CAC staff, the first question might be:

1. Describe a time when you did your very best work, (or worked really effectively within your team), or your team worked together really effectively.
2. Without being modest, what did you value most about yourself? Your team?
3. What were the core factors that contributed to this success, or that give life to your team? (Cooperider, Whitney et al., 2005, p. 24).

After the 40 minutes of pair interviewing, the whole group reconvenes, with a facilitator drawing out comments about the process and discoveries made. The facilitator can ask for the particularly appreciative quote, compelling stories, themes that stood out, and the factors that might bring positive change for everyone (Cooperider, Whitney et al., 2005, p. 99). ***The AI Handbook describes how this appreciative interview builds the kind of warm understanding that can jump-start inquiry into wider issues.*** It’s fun and unusual to be listened to and heard, so people generally love appreciative conversations. These exchanges generate energy.

Since people are so used to griping, negatives will often need to be managed during an AI interview or planning process. People should be free to complain within limits (perhaps five minutes), but a facilitator or interview partner can note things that may need to be changed and then redirect the discussion towards more positive questions, postponing things to be fixed for a later discussion. The goal is not to ignore problems and issues but rather to set the climate for discovery and inspiration rather than plodding through the same old slog of problems. As Facilitator Martha Lask has said so often in LEC, “Under every problem (or gripe) is a wish for how things could look – what kind of work ethic, justness, commitment, professionalism, mission would make things better” (personal communication at LECII Meeting

May 24, 2007). An AI facilitator needs to practice kindly holding the AI stance in the face of negativity, and pulling towards the wants and wishes underneath the complaints.

### **Successful Uses of AI in the CAC world**

CAC Leaders in LEC have found considerable success in applying AI in their interactions with their staff members, an often discussed stress and struggle point. Leaders have used AI approaches in supervision, in resolving particular performance problems, in performance appraisals and in staff meetings and staff retreats. Leaders have found that applying an appreciative interview protocol improved the entire tone of boss-supervisee conversations. Appreciative questioning encouraged supervisees to start by describing their successes, to spell out concerns and lessons learned and then to envision future outcomes. These questions empower staff to come up with strategies themselves, which often include professional development opportunities. AI turns the attention towards what people know and want. With the power of AI, the CAC Leaders themselves felt empowered to be more direct about where they and their agencies were heading and what they needed from particular staff. Execs have been especially enthusiastic about implementing an AI Performance Review (recast as a **Performance Feedback Discussion**) protocol created by Martha Lask and shared widely within LEC. That protocol is attached at the end of this document. Even within umbrella agencies that have particular required performance review formats, CAC Leaders have had success by emphasizing their more appreciative aspects.

In addition, LEC participants have reported good results using AI in team building, with MDT partners in protocol development as well as deepening overall commitment to the MDT process, for interviewing Board members and for Board strategic planning. Leaders have been able to address the common challenges of turf issues and territoriality among partners by totally reframing that. Questions can be phrased appreciatively, such as “When agencies are working at their best with their clear identities and advocating for what they care about, how would that look?” Instead of concentrating on all that doesn’t work, shift to “What are the elements that we do well and give energy for our work?”

CAC Leaders have applied AI to State Chapter committee work, and to conversations with state officials and potential donors. Planning and protocol development call for more of the visioning and implementation phases of AI’s 4-D schema as described in the Handbook. AI is a fully developed strategy, but is also a state of mind and way of thinking that requires some practice. Many LEC participants have described how practicing an appreciative approach within their own families has been fruitful! One mentioned how many more conversations she was able to have with her teenaged son! Along with the single book that is the basis of this section, there is a wealth of writing on Appreciative Inquiry on paper and online.



## **Building Block III: The Thinking Environment**

**More Time to Think: A Way of Being in the World**, by Nancy Kline, 2009, Fisher King Publishing, Pool-in-Wharfedale, England.

### **Components of a Thinking Environment**

One of the major overt and underlying topics of LEC is the struggle to create some kind of balance between work and private life. CACs (and other non-profits) exact very heavy demands on their leaders; the task is huge, the personnel are few, and CACs work with but often outside of the major bureaucracies. LEC strives to convince CAC Leaders that taking adequate time for oneself and one's family is fair, desirable and truly necessary. That must be a personal planning process, one that LEC fully supports and legitimizes.

But LEC imparts skills that could trim the time demands of the job. LEC's largely experiential curriculum is a matrix of appreciative approaches to leading more efficient and effective organizations and collaborations. Creating a **Thinking Environment** is one approach that spans both work and home life, encapsulating much of the philosophy of LEC and quite accessible to anyone. Nancy Kline describes this process in enthusiastic terms in her second book, **More Time to Think: A Way of Being in the World** (2009), which contains more extensive "how-to" models than her earlier book cited in the LEC curriculum. Two introductory pdfs are also available online.

*Kline poetically theorizes that encouraging people (and oneself) carefully and uninterruptedly to think through problems for themselves without interruption creates quicker and better solutions.* Less a manual and more an inspirational prose poem, her book is a meditation on active listening, witnessing, and authenticity that blends seamlessly with Appreciative Inquiry.

She reiterates and describes her ten components of a **Thinking Environment** in all her publications; this particular framework is paraphrased from her online Introduction to the **Thinking Environment** (Kline, 2013, p. 2).

**First, PREPARE: select the space, invite the right people; produce the right information; pre-phrase the right questions**

**1. DIVERSITY**

- Welcome divergent thinking and diverse group identities

**2. PLACE**

- Create a physical environment that says back to people, "You matter"

**3. INFORMATION**

- Supply the facts

- Dismantle denial

**4. INCISIVE QUESTIONS**

- Remove assumptions that limit our ability to think for ourselves clearly and creatively

**Then, explain and facilitate the process of a Thinking Environment throughout.**

**5. EQUALITY**

- Treat each other as thinking peers
- Give equal turns and attention
- Keep agreements and boundaries

#### **6. ATTENTION**

- Listen with palpable respect and without interruption

#### **7. EASE**

- Offer freedom from internal rush or urgency

#### **8. APPRECIATION**

- Offer genuine acknowledgement of a person's qualities
- Practice a 5:1 ratio of appreciation to criticism

#### **9. ENCOURAGEMENT**

- Give courage to go to the cutting edge of ideas by moving beyond internal competition

#### **10. FEELINGS**

- Allow sufficient emotional release to restore thinking

### **Listening to Ignite**

She includes many stories about ways people have experimented with these components in conversations, supervision, coaching and mentoring, couples therapy, and more structurally in business teams. Just as in LEC, profound listening and bestowing generative attention to people are foremost and central, and **are their own productive force**. Kline describes the component of generative attention as "an act of creation" (Kline, 2009, p. 33) and a catalyst that "brings about change in a person's thinking by firing up connections" (Kline, 2009, p. 35). High quality attention is "listening to ignite" (Kline, 2009, p. 37) rather than planning to reply, as we ordinarily do in conversation. Generative attention works because "The key feature for people of this quality of Attention is knowing they won't be interrupted...That is what allows their mind to relax and, paradoxically, fire up. That is also what makes time to think take less time." (Kline, 2009, p. 37).

### **Active Listening**

A brief review of active listening might be useful here, in that the creation and maintenance of a thinking environment will be impossible without good listening skills. Active listening means giving full attention to the speaker, not planning just for what to say next in a conversation, but responding in practiced but natural ways that kindle creativity. Give minimal encouraging prompts, and maintain a good deal of silence. At some points it may be important to test for understanding by paraphrasing, not parroting, and summarizing what you heard the speaker say. Feedback in the form of reflecting back the emotional content of the talk, sometimes sharing one's own emotional response, and validating the importance of what the speaker shared can be generative. In some meeting contexts, listeners may need to ask more probing, incisive questions, and speakers who become overly aggressive or agitated may need to be redirected towards a more productive tone.

Kline states that we humans need appreciation in order to operate, and cites biological research showing that receiving and thinking about appreciative thoughts actually heightens blood flow for

optimal brain functioning. She quips, “Thinking needs blood, and blood needs appreciation” (Kline, 2009, p. 57). Kline postulates that **people literally think better when others appreciate them, and they stop thinking when criticized**. Disparaging people for their mistakes and weaknesses never helps anyone perform or think better; in fact, it has the opposite, damaging effect. Kline posits that truly creating a full **Thinking Environment**, all ten components, is the complete expression of appreciation. ***The only dynamic that can support innovative thinking and productive problem-solving in teams is recognizing and saluting strengths in ourselves and others, and then building on them.***

### **Incisive Questions in Rounds**

The application of one of the elements – Incisive Questions to remove untrue limiting assumptions – may be difficult to grasp. Kline does not propose particular questions, but instead describes appreciative questions that will come to the mind of the questioner naturally to break through blocks in thinking. ***The Incisive Questions will flow from the generative listening.*** Implicit in all statements are personal assumptions; some of these assumptions are simply not true but lived as if true. Many are false assumptions that stem from experiences of criticism, self-doubt, low expectations and stereotypes. Kline says that we need to cut through our limiting assumptions and replace them with liberating alternatives (information). ***Kline’s pattern for Incisive Questions is: “What are you assuming that is most stopping you from going forward? Do you think that assumption is true? What is true and liberating instead? If you knew (insert liberating assumption), how would you go forward?”*** (Kline 2009, p. 90). This question template can be applied to conversations, supervision, and even to group discussions.

### **Improving Meetings with Discussion Rounds**

Transforming dull, unproductive meetings is a key feature of Kline’s work. She knows that people are usually bored by unfocused meetings, and just shut down because they hate being interrupted or dismissed. ***She proposes that the best way to generate good thinking in a meeting is to give everyone an uninterrupted turn, systematically by going around the room and giving each person the floor, with attention and equality.*** Incidentally, this is the best way to include the voices of the introverts in the room as well. Again, from Kline’s Intro pdf, “The best way to get the best thinking from everyone is to populate the meeting with systematic uninterrupted Rounds. Rounds increase the generative nature of the group’s thinking. Rounds also usually produce superior ideas in less time. A Round is a simple enough concept, but it requires these four actions from the Chair:

1. Decide first what the question is that people will be addressing in the Round
2. Determine the direction of the Round (clockwise, anti-clockwise)
3. Ask for a volunteer to begin the Round
4. Remind people that no one speaks again until the Round is completed
5. Listen to each person attentively

If you do only one thing to improve the thinking in groups, institute Rounds. And be sure to decide first on the question.” (Kline, 2103, p. 5).

To teach meeting redesign, Kline highlights a company chairperson who developed a template for focusing the meeting agenda on what kind of outcome was needed. For example

Did they need a decision?

Did they need new ideas?

Did they need to discover the implications of earlier decisions?

Did they need to say how they felt?

Did they need to hear and consider new information?

Did they need to update each other?

Did they need to face something dangerous?

Did they need to connect?

(Kline 2009, p. 222)

The chairperson then shaped each agenda item as a question that would provide the needed response. He then continued to alternate Incisive Questions, rounds of answers, group and paired discussions, and more questions (many of which will be Incisive Questions). He always ended the meeting with Rounds of Appreciation for the group process and often for each of the individual participants.

The Thinking Environment shares much with Appreciative Inquiry and is entirely harmonious with it. Kline's second book is not at all what one might expect from a business volume; it is a personal, emotional, meandering, narrative tale, yet crystal clear in its instruction. Both individual self-development and team building could benefit greatly from Kline's way of being in the world.

## **Building Block IV: Seeing Systems – Tops, Middles and Bottoms**

**Seeing Systems: Unlocking the Mysteries of Organizational Life**, by Barry Oshry, 2007, Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc. San Francisco.

**Total System Power: Developers, Fixers, Integrators, and Validators**, by Barry Oshry, <http://govLeaders.org/total-system-power.htm>, downloaded 2016.

### **Understanding and Coping with Complex Systems**

LEC has attempted to give participants some conceptualizations for understanding their often complex organizations, for fashioning personal responses to structures they don't control, and for cultivating true partnerships. One intriguing model is from Barry Oshry, who for decades has designed and led experiential workshops that divide participants into three (Executives, Managers, and Workers) and sometimes four (Customers) social "classes" and then let them run with various tasks which illuminate very predictable power struggles and responses. He describes these dramas in detail in **Seeing Systems: Unlocking the Mysteries of Organizational Life (2007)**, one of just a few book-length volumes he has published. His writing is loose, often in prose poems and dialogues, but also chock full of wisdom, and worth reading to really internalize what he teaches. Online (and attached) is a readily available and more straightforward summary at <http://govLeaders.org/total-system-power.htm>. Even without the benefit of a full experiential workshop, Oshry's thesis is quite illuminating and useful; you may never look at your job the same way again.

He has devoted his career to helping people understand and fix the systems they work in. He proposes that we are blind to the dysfunctional patterns we all fall into, that those patterns are predictable and inherent in the different roles we play and have little to do with the characteristics of individual people, and that we can learn to avoid dysfunction and actually partner creatively with each other. ***What we feel in these various positions – Tops, Middles and Bottoms – is very tangible and felt personally even though the stimulus is actually quite impersonal and context-generated.***

First comes an explanation of what one experiences in the Tops, Middles and Bottoms roles. **Tops**, those in charge, live in a world of **Complexity**, with many difficult, ambiguous, unpredictable "issues regarding the direction, culture, growth and structure of the system" (Oshry, 2007, p. 15) and **Responsibility**, "accountable for the successes and failures of the system" (Oshry, 2007, p. 15). **Middles** live in a world that is constantly **Tearing** apart, constantly pulled between forces (Oshry, 1996, p. 17), and never able to meet anyone's demands all on their own. **Bottoms** experience **Invisibility**, "often not seen by higher-ups" and **Vulnerability**, where "higher-ups can influence their lives in major and minor ways," in surprisingly good and terrifyingly bad ways (Oshry, 2007, p. 16). So **Tops** constantly feel burdened; **Middles** feel torn, weak, confused, fractured and alone; and **Bottoms** feel oppressed (Oshry, 2007, p. 64). The inner voices play the same script over and over. People get mad, withdraw or lose focus.

Oshry describes two postures we can take in response to people in these roles around us (Oshry, 2007, p. 24-26). We can reflexively take their actions personally, make excuses, and express righteous indignation about their malice. Or, with greater understanding of the innate power of roles, we can choose compassionately to acknowledge others' experience, maintain a belief in their valuable humanity, then work out how to respond most powerfully within the context we find ourselves

## In The Middle

CAC Executives spend a lot of time in the **Middle**, between various organizational partners pulling them one way and another. As **Middles**, they often reflexively feel ineffective and powerless to meet all the demands placed on them, even when they are doing a good job. Yet CAC Execs are also the **Top** of their own CAC (vested by their Board of Directors), but may also be in the **Middle** or sometimes even the **Bottom** of a large umbrella organization or government entity – all three roles in the same day!

Oshry describes various **Middle** configurations, with pulls on different planes. The pull can be **vertical** – Supervisors operating between Workers and Management; or **horizontal** – negotiators between parties, managers coordinating with other managers (Oshry, 2007, p. 90). CAC Executives typically function as **Middles**: either between Board and staff or between their various levels of administrative bosses and the CAC staff; between stakeholder organizations; and between team members. Often CAC Leaders are **Tops** in the Middle of the other **Tops** – heads of law enforcement and departments of human services, for example. CAC Leaders sometimes describe themselves as referees trying to tamp down conflicts, punching bags, crisis counselors, compasses spinning in circles, even as chess players (or pawns) whose adversaries keep making up new rules on the fly! None of these is acceptable over the long run. But there are better options.

Oshry's newer on-line article provides brief but powerful directives to those in each role:

**Tops – Be system developers, involving, coaching, creating responsibility in others** (Oshry <http://govLeaders.org/total-system-power.htm>, p. 4)

**Middles – Be integrators – connect, share information, coordinate the system, partner with others** (Op. cit., p. 7)

**Bottoms – See oneself as a central player** (Op. cit., p. 6)

**Middles** may sabotage themselves by primarily connecting to those **above** rather than to those **all around**. The wiser choice is to choose to become a **System Integrator**. Oshry describes this as follows:

*“Middles integrate the system by moving back and forth between **dispersing and integrating**. When we disperse, we move out to lead, manage, supervise, advise, coach other individuals and groups. When we integrate, we join together with our peers to:*

- 1. Share **information** (intelligence) about our parts of the system;*
- 2. Use the collective information to diagnose system issues—new dangers that are looming, new opportunities that are emerging;*

3. *Strengthen the coping and prospecting capacities of system parts by sharing information and best practices gathered through integration;*
4. *Coordinate system functioning, reduce unwanted duplication of effort, and move resources and knowledge to where they are needed in the system.*

*Integration improves the quality of our dispersing: we are stronger, supported, informed about system wide conditions, better able to provide others with the information and resources they need to do their work.”* (Oshry <http://govLeaders.org/total-system-power.htm>, p. 7)

In LEC, designer and facilitator Martha Lask sums it all up, giving concise, useful advice for navigating the CAC realm, distilled from years of experience with Oshry’s theories and adapted from **Seeing Systems** (Oshry, 2007):

1. **Don’t take it personally; agencies are not doing this on purpose, it’s just what happens.**
2. Be a **Top** when you can –
  - a. Be the **Leader** and be willing to make decisions.
  - b. Be a **Top** who creates responsibility throughout the system.
3. Be a **Bottom** when you should -
  - a. Take responsibility for your condition and the condition of the whole system.
  - b. Let the information stop with you rather than dumping it down on the **Bottoms**, and,
  - c. Be the buffer; start everyone talking things over.
4. Be a **Customer** who gets in the middle of the delivery processes and makes them work for the customers
5. Be a **Middle** who can
  - a. Maintain independence of thought and action, and
  - b. Be a coach and facilitator: coach A to talk to B, coach B to talk to A
6. **INTEGRATE WITH YOUR PEERS** (paraphrased account of personal communication to LECIV, July 8, 2009)

For CAC Leaders, then, the advice is to embrace and make the most of each of the roles as they appear. The instruction to integrate with peers has many meanings. It can refer to developing additional peer support wherever it can be gained, building a Peer Consulting group, and thoughtfully utilizing and sharing one’s strengths and the strengths of others on the team. Consider adopting Oshry’s System Integrator model above (i.e. collecting and sharing information) as well as some of the other influencing strategies described in Building Block V below, especially the charts on pp. 25 and 29.

## **Building Block V: Influence Without Authority in Partnerships**

*“Leadership is the art of getting others to do what you need them to do because they want to do it.”*  
Dwight Eisenhower

**Lateral Leadership: Getting it done when you’re not the boss**, by Roger Fisher and Alan Sharp, 2004. Profile Books Ltd; 2nd edition (Originally published as “Getting It Done” by Harper Business Books, 1998.)

**Influence Without Authority: How to lead people who don’t report to you**, by Allan Cohen and David Bradford, 2005, Wiley (2<sup>nd</sup> edition).

### **The Person with Influence is a Powerful Leader**

Leadership is neither title nor position. The very best and most admired leaders do not lead from power; power does not necessarily create followership, and it is others’ followership that is the metric of true leadership. Today, most organizations are moving toward flatter, matrixed and team-based models. The theory is that with change and complexity come the need to be nimbler, more inclusive of diverse thought, and more collaborative. In this model, power is more about one’s ability to influence and get things done outside of traditional reporting lines. In other words, ***the person with influence has the power.***

The Leadership model has shifted:

**The Old Leadership Model:** Personal Power to control and be served.

**The New Leadership Model:** Empower others, influence and serve others.

One might counter that the Executive of a Children’s Advocacy Center works in a still power-based “command and control” environment, namely the criminal justice system. Nonetheless, like the middle manager in a matrixed organization who doesn’t sit at the command level of the multiple business functions to whom s/he reports, ***the CAC Executive must similarly become a master of building partnerships and wielding influence with those leaders who do sit in positions of command in their agencies as well as with the line workers they manage.***

CAC Leaders sit in a challenging position from which to effect trans-agency coordination and change – at the **Top** of his/her own agency, but in the **Middle** within the multi-disciplinary team and perhaps a larger umbrella organization or public system. This manual shares and illustrates a variety of valuable skills that coalesce towards building more productive relationships and increasing influence in that context. Appreciative Inquiry, recognizing and saluting strengths in ourselves and others, careful generative listening, and Oshry’s structural analyses all foster expanding leadership capacity; they are the skills that leaders can employ to expand influence to build strong partnerships.



Two seminal books on the subject, **Lateral Leadership: Getting it done when you're not the boss** and **Influence without Authority: How to lead people who don't report to you**, can enhance the CAC Executive's influencing skills. Be sure to access the very useful detailed instructions for dealing with a variety of people and situation in each of these books. Their influence models are summarized below.

### **Influence Model One: The Fisher-Sharp 5-Step Lateral Leadership Model**

In the opening acknowledgments to their original edition, Fisher and Sharp say their inspiration came from considering the question:

**“What advice could we give to *one* person – whatever his position – who wanted to make a group work more effectively?”**

***This is the situation and the challenge of being a CAC Leader who is part of, and aspires to be a key influencer in, a Multidisciplinary Team and a larger group of stakeholders.*** In answer to their own question, the authors lay out a 5-step model for leading when one is not formally in charge. Its steps can be applied to virtually any setting where exercising appropriate leadership is called for. Furthermore, their model is aligned with the five axioms laid out above and pulls together much of the wisdom in this overall document.

#### **1. Sharpen Your Purpose and Your Goals**

People accomplish the most when they have a clear vision and a sharp set of objectives. It follows that any group's first order of business is to articulate as exactly as possible what it hopes to achieve. ***The person who articulates the vision and asks the question “Can we start by clarifying our goals here?” – and who then assumes the lead in discussing and drafting those goals – is automatically taking a leadership role, whatever his or her position.*** S/he sets the agenda. On the leader's part, according to Fisher and Sharp, this requires having already:

- Formulated in your own mind the purpose – for yourself, your own CAC, and for the multi-disciplinary team – that inspires, motivates and guides you.
- Visualized that purpose perpetually taking shape over 3 points in time: some **immediately achievable** and energizing objectives to start working towards; a **mid-point** that is a worthy goal in and of itself; and a longer range **“end state.”**

#### **2. Think systematically and systemically**

People typically plunge right into the topic at hand and start arguing over what to do. Effective Leaders, by contrast, learn to think systematically – that is, they gather and lay out the necessary data, analyze the causes of the situation, and propose actions based on this analysis. In the group or team setting, ***the***

***one who help keep participants focused by asking appropriate, appreciative, generative and igniting questions is exhibiting effective leadership:***

- Do we all agree on a shared objective and an understanding of the present situation?
- Can we focus on what we do well? Can we discern the real causes of our problems?
- Do we all have an appreciation for each other's organizational strengths and imperatives and their implications?
- Do we all have the **information** we need to analyze this situation, and have we shared it?
- How can we together generate the environment to get creative and envision multiple approaches, prioritizing for best multi-disciplinary fit and maximum impact?

### **3. Learn from experience – while it's happening**

Teams often plow ahead on a project, then sometimes conduct a review at the very end to figure out what they accomplished. But it's more effective for teams (or individuals) to learn as they go along, when events are fresh in everyone's mind. The team can use what they learn from each mini-review to make needed adjustments to their work processes or their goals. ***The one who prompts and enables the group to engage in ongoing mini-reviews and learn from them is playing the de facto leadership role.***

### **4. Engage all others -- find them meaningful roles**

When a large group is working all together, ironically, the risk of individual disengagement escalates. It's the old story that "what's everybody's job is nobody's job." To encourage people to commit to accomplishing tasks, leaders have to match the work to what team members particular find meaningful. Rath and Concie (2008) describe these basic needs as **Trust, Compassion, Stability and Hope**. According to Fisher and Sharp, people only commit to a task when it fulfills one or more of their emotional interests in work: **Respect, Autonomy and Impact**. The Cohen-Bradford Influence Model described below proposes a whole variety of personal and professional interests that Leaders can appeal to. Demonstrate your own belief – and cascade the belief – that contributing ideas is every member's job; that the role that every member plays is critical; that success is fully shared.

### **5. Provide appreciative feedback and igniting questions**

If you're not the boss of someone, what kind of feedback can you provide? One thing that's always valued is simple appreciation – "I thought you did a great job in there." As Nancy Kline (2009) advises, people literally think better when others appreciate them and tell them so. So, ***it's imperative that a leader find things to appreciate and then express that appreciation often.*** Sometimes, leaders can put themselves a position to help people improve their performance through subtle coaching. Effective coaches ask a lot of incisive and igniting questions, for instance, "What was the most successful thing you did on this part of the project?" They recognize that people may try hard and fail anyway: "What made it hard to accomplish your part of the task?" "What assumptions might have stopped you from

going forward?” In a restrained and artful coaching situation, leaders can offer thoughtful suggestions for improvement, being careful to explain the observation and reasoning that lie behind them.

The authors close their discussion with this rather surprising comparison of what can be influenced with and without authority (keep “**Integrating the system**” in mind from pp 20 and 21 above!):

<b>To improve your <i>personal skills</i> at getting things done:</b>	
<b><i>Without</i> authority, you can:</b>	<b><i>With</i> authority, you can:</b>
Formulate your purpose in terms of results.	Formulate your purpose in terms of results.
Think about the system systematically from problem through diagnosis to strategy and tactics.	Think about the system systematically from problem through diagnosis to strategy and tactics.
Learn quickly from experience by reviewing results often.	Learn quickly from experience by reviewing results often.
Become fully engaged in a challenging task, and engage others in it.	Become fully engaged in a challenging task, and engage others in it.
Help create a climate of mutual support and feedback – up, down, & across.	Help create a climate of mutual support and feedback – up, down, & across.
<b>Pursue the Multidisciplinary Team’s goals jointly by using those same skills. Working towards that goal:</b>	
<b><i>Without</i> authority, you can:</b>	<b><i>With</i> authority, you can:</b>
Offer information, data, ideas, suggestions, and advice	Offer information, data, ideas, suggestions, and advice
Model the behaviors you hope to see from everyone	Model the behaviors you hope to see from everyone
Treat those with whom you work as colleagues who may even have better data and ideas.	Treat those with whom you work as colleagues who may even have better data and ideas.
Remain open to others’ and different ideas.	Remain open to others’ and different ideas.
	<i>AND</i>
	Make decisions that no one else can.
	Require others to do things.

***N.B. There are just two items that require authority. Having and leading from influence doesn't require role authority as much as one might think! Tack this list above your desk for daily inspiration.***

### **Influence Model Two: The Cohen-Bradford Influence Model: Using Reciprocity to Gain Influence**

(outline adapted with permission from from Mind Tools, 145-157 St John Street, London, EC1V 4PY United Kingdom.  
<https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/influence-model.htm>)

The Cohen-Bradford Influence Model was created by Allan R. Cohen and David L. Bradford, both leadership experts and distinguished professors. The Influence Model is based on the **law of reciprocity** – the belief that all of the positive and negative things we do for (or to) others will be paid back over time, and that **people will trade work and commitment for all kinds of things they consciously and subconsciously desire**. For example, if you give your boss a tip that cuts hours off her workload, you might expect, perhaps subconsciously, that she'll do something nice for you in the future. **Or if you can provide appreciation, resources, valuable information, friendship, recognition or a sense of deeper meaning to people in often thankless jobs, they will be more responsive to and cooperative with your agency's goals.**

Remember that fundamentally we all seek to satisfy a few basic needs in our workplace: **Trust, Compassion, Stability, Hope** (Rath and Concie, 2008, p. 3), **Respect, Autonomy and Impact** (Fisher and Sharp, 2004). CAC Leaders will likely recognize many ways they have already used this law of reciprocity without calling it a name (notably with food!). Many CACs specialize in showing value, sharing information, increasing fun and reinforcing cooperation. Hopefully the sections below can spark some more possible influences (see Currencies table, p. 29) with which to experiment.

### **Using the Model**

#### **Step 1. Assume That Everyone Can Help You**

Though intentionally exercising influence can make you feel nervous, unsure, or tired from repeated rebuffs, take care never to completely write anyone off: approach this situation by looking appreciatively at every person as a valuable potential ally *once you know their true interests*.

#### **Step 2. Prioritize Your Objectives**

Identify why you are trying to influence this person and what is it that you need from them? What are your primary and secondary goals? But importantly, *keep your personal wants and goals out of the situation*. Focus on only your organizational goals!

#### **Step 3. Understand the Other Person's Situation**

Do your homework to understand your potential ally's world, and how s/he is judged. For instance, what performance metrics do they work by? How are they rewarded? Ask yourself:

1. How is this person "measured" at work? What does this person's boss expect from them?
2. What are his or her primary responsibilities?
3. What pressure does this person experience from his or her boss and colleagues?
4. What is the culture of this person's organization?
5. What seems to be important to this person, both emotionally and performance-wise?

This step can be challenging; and it will determine whether or not you can identify what type of factors are important to them, which is the next step.

#### **Step 4. Identify What Really Matters -- to you and to them**

This is the most important step in the **Influence Model**. Identify what **truly matters** to your potential ally. If you pay attention and listen carefully to the wishes expressed underneath the conversation, you should be able to hear or see which of five types of factors (*see the list of currencies below*) this person values most.

##### **a. Inspiration-Related Factors**

These are all related to inspiration, vision and morality/strength. People who value these factors want to **find meaning** in what they're doing. They may go out of their way to help you if they know in their heart that it's the right thing to do, or if it contributes in some way to a valued cause. Appeal to their sense of integrity and virtue. ***CAC Leaders are sturdy vessels who convey the CAC vision.***

##### **b. Task-Related Factors**

These relate to the task at hand and to getting the job done. Here, you'll want to exchange resources such as money, food, personnel or supplies. You could offer to help these people on a current project they're working on. Or you could offer your expertise, or your organization's expertise, in exchange for their help. Keep in mind that an important task-related factor is challenge. Many people, especially those who want to test or expand their skills, value the opportunity to work on challenging tasks.

##### **c. Position-Related Factors**

People who value this type of factor focus on recognition, reputation and visibility. You'll want to appeal to this sense of recognition by publicly acknowledging their efforts. CACs are uniquely positioned to truly recognize and reward line investigators, supervisors, and administrators for their cleverness, insight, high quality work with child victims and visionary collaborative work. Many jobs now require proven abilities to collaborate.

##### **d. Relationship-Related Factors**

People who value relationships want to belong. They want strong relationships with their team and colleagues. So, make these people feel they're connected to you or your organization on a personal level. Regularly demonstrate, with words and your presence, that you understand their

ethos, that they belong to your in-crowd and they are personally supported in the hard work they're doing or have done.

**e. Personal-Related Factors**

These relate to the other person on a personal level. You can appeal to this person by acknowledging their value and showing them sincere gratitude for their help. Allow them some freedom to make their own decisions if they're helping you on a team. Provide training and keep things clear for them, so they never feel hassled or incompetent working with you.

**5. Analyze the Relationship**

What relationship do you have with this person? If you know him or her well and you're on easy terms, you can directly ask him or her for what you need. **But if you're newly forming or repairing a relationship, then you need to focus first on your own systemic examination and evaluation of the potential for partnering**, and then connecting on some personal level first before moving to the final step. See the outline below and the attached LEC tool Analyzing a Partnership.

**Step 6. Make the Exchange -- Spend the Currencies**

Once you feel you know and completely understand what your ally wants or needs, and you've determined what you have to offer, you can make the "exchange" and put your findings into action. In their book, Cohen and Bradford use the metaphor of "currencies" to describe all the kinds of entities that can be exchanged. Make sure that when you make the offer or exchange, it's done in a planned way that builds trust. Show respect, empathy and understanding to the other person. Show your gratitude to them for helping you, and keep looking for ways to help others.

**Things to remember:**

- Reciprocity is neither bribery nor manipulation. It's about relationship building to mutually advance the strategic imperatives of your respective organizations.
- It is collegial. Helping colleagues feels good for each party involved.
- The reciprocity process becomes easier and completely natural as you become practiced.

**Additional Resources**

**A. Commonly Exchanged "Currencies" (there are more in the Cohen-Bradford book)**

**COMMONLY EXCHANGED "CURRENCIES"**

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**Inspiration-related Currencies**

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Vision Excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Being involved in a task/enterprise that has larger significance for the organization, customers or society</li><li>• Contributing to something of great importance</li></ul>
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<b>Task-related Currencies</b>	
Resources Cooperation Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lending or giving money, budget, personnel, space, etc.</li> <li>• Giving task support or aiding implementation</li> <li>• Providing organizational and/or technical knowledge</li> </ul>
<b>Position-related Currencies</b>	
Advancement Recognition Reputation Importance/"Insiderness"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Giving tasks/assignments that can aid in promotion</li> <li>• Acknowledging effort, accomplishment or ability</li> <li>• Enhancing how a person is regarded</li> <li>• Offering a sense of "belonging" or being in the "inner circle"</li> </ul>
<b>Relationship-related Currencies</b>	
Acceptance/Inclusion Personal Support Understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing closeness or friendship</li> <li>• Giving personal and emotional backing</li> <li>• Listening and empathizing to others' concerns and issues</li> </ul>
<b>Personal-related Currencies</b>	
Self-Concept Challenge/Learning Gratitude	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Affirming one's values, self-esteem and identity</li> <li>• Involving in tasks/initiatives that increase/expand expertise</li> <li>• Expressing appreciation or indebtedness</li> </ul>

**CACs should define the special "currencies" that their multidisciplinary work makes available.** CACs may offer opportunities to acquire skills that will help partners in their daily jobs: techniques for understanding and interacting with people; new ways to gather and present information; methods to encourage other agencies and other teams to cooperate; and campaigns that cultivate a positive perception of public institutions. Successful MDT work will look good on resumes and will support individual advancement, since more and more high-level positions expect proven expertise working collaboratively on teams. CACs can also provide experiences that directly address and reduce burn-out and secondary trauma, both as specific workshops/trainings but also fun group events and constant compassionate human interaction. **Among all the stakeholders, CACs are uniquely able to recognize collaborative excellence and increase fun.**

### **B. The LEC Model: Analyzing a Partnership**

This outline of the fuller worksheet attached lays out LEC Facilitator Martha Lask's model for analyzing and preparing purposefully to build partnerships in order to advance one's organizational goals. It dovetails nicely with the models above, though all steps of analysis and then resulting partnering discussions would be informed by Appreciative Inquiry and an attitude of generative listening and compassion that may be less expressed in business models. Whether one feels unpracticed or uncomfortable with building partnerships or thinking about trading currencies, or just wants a step-by-step process to think through a particular situation and plan an approach, printing out the full worksheet attached below will be helpful. This is a summary of that worksheet.

### **Analyzing a Partnership**

- 1) Define the relationship: e.g. peer, boss, other status; top, middle, bottom in relation to you; how do you relate now?**
- 2) Identify the goal of the partnership: What do we need/expect from each other?**
- 3) Analyze interests – theirs and yours: what values/currencies might matter; how might we help each other?**
- 4) Connect with the person: how could you provide personal support, acceptance or understanding more successfully?**
- 5) Express, explore and acknowledge your own and the other's interests and clarify expectations.**
- 6) Clarify concerns and issues.**
- 7) Notice and address possible resistance: how might you address possible underlying fears?**
- 8) Identify areas of agreement and/or address disagreement: what might be common ground?**
- 9) Identify next steps: what more information is needed, plan the partnering conversations**



## **Building Block VI: Peer Consulting and Support**

### **CAC Leaders need Peer Support**

There is nothing more obvious than that CAC Executives can feel isolated, lonely, misunderstood and undersupplied with technical and leadership/management information. The work can be traumatizing; personal factors and responses affect the ability to lead. All CAC Leaders need regular and sustainable peer support. NCA, Regional CACs and Chapters help a great deal by providing technical assistance and camaraderie at meetings and trainings. CAC Leaders may develop some trusting friendships with their fellow execs in other cities. CACs resident in larger organizations may have some quasi-peers in other branches of their organization with whom to establish supportive business friendships. Taking time to talk with personal friends, retired or in other lines of work, is a gift to oneself. These are all very worthwhile for reducing the feeling of aloneness and transferring skills. Even with all this, adopting a particular structured approach to Peer Consultation can provide deeper learning and more confidence in leadership.

### **The LEC Model for Peer Consulting**

LEC participants work in small groups throughout both their in-class year and their mentoring year. LEC can form groups of people from different states for maximum privacy. These groups schedule and carry out monthly, structured Peer Coaching telephone calls, to which they give their complete attention. LEC trains participants in the methodology and structures and then supports this call protocol, and participants have found the calls incredibly useful for their growth as leaders.

The possibilities are out there for all CAC Leaders to develop their own Peer Consulting and Support Groups. Execs could reach out to other execs they have met, or could request some referrals from their Chapter or Region. To develop a Peer Consulting and Support Group of 4-to-6 leaders modeled on LEC, some helpful guidelines pertain that may seem distinctive:

1. Separate technical assistance from peer consulting/peer support, so you don't just **fix** but rather **empower**.
2. Foster peer support outside of your own state for complete privacy, but certainly seek and enjoy support from your in-state colleagues for ease of access and shared local knowledge.
3. Learn and use the protocol to discipline and enhance the experience, even though it may feel awkward at the beginning; the structure contributes greatly to success.
4. Make the Peer Consultation group a study and practice group for the concepts and skills described in this manual, as well as for addressing specific leadership concerns and conundrums.

Peer support will benefit from proficient appreciative questioning as well. All have to assiduously avoid the quick **fix**, which takes some determined practice, because CAC Leaders can be expert **fixers**. It does take almost super-human discipline to schedule regular phone calls and stick to them, away from computers and other interruptions, to solely pay attention to peers. But the benefits are immense, as all

LEC participants will attest. Requests for technical assistance (TA) can also be tacked on to the final five or ten minutes of a phone call, as TA is often quite important for problem-solving.

LEC Facilitator Martha Lask has adapted and refined the **LEC Peer Consultation Summary Sheet** (attached below in fuller form) from a variety of sources, and from years of feedback from LEC groups who have practiced it in regular peer consultation. Conversation is patterned on practicing AI skills, deep listening with compassion and careful questioning. The steps for conducting a peer consultation phone call, in brief here but explained more fully on the attachment, are as follows:

1. Begin with a brief **check-in** about how you are.
2. Confirm one or two **Presenters** who have volunteered to each present their **issue** and their requests for specific assistance. Others will be Facilitator, Observers and possibly Consultants if there are enough people.
3. The Facilitator reviews Group Agreements and **Conference Call Behavior** (e.g. focus).
4. One group member leads the group in a **Centering Activity**.
5. Each **Presenter** has 25-30 minutes to present and receive consultation. The group consults according to the principles proposed throughout this document; including **deep listening with compassion and without interruption**; asking **appreciative, facilitating questions** exemplified in #6 on the attachment; and **challenging assumptions**.
6. **Facilitating Questions** are ones to which we cannot possibly know the answer, and may include asking “What assumptions are you making right now that might be limiting you thinking?” or “Are we solving the problem or helping you?”
7. The **Presenters** review their insights and planned actions
8. All **evaluate** the experience and close out the session, confirming a time for a next call.

### Help For Thinking for Yourself

Applicable to any paired, thinking partnership conversation, Nancy Kline describes her own style in a way that is a clear parallel to the peer style learned and experienced in LEC and found so valuable. She perceives of her support role as:

*“My role ... is to help you think for yourself.*

*My role ... is not to do your thinking for you.*

*The issues and questions you bring to ... sessions are best addressed and explored by you, not by my interpretation of you or your situation...*

*I will offer my insights and perspectives and other tools only after you have had sufficient time to come up with your own, often better ideas thoroughly, and only if you specifically ask me to...*

(Kline 2009, p. 187).

## In Closing

The Northeast Regional Children’s Advocacy Center’s goal for this guide is to draw your attention to valuable insights and skills that will coalesce towards strengthening your leadership identity and confidence, developing more productive relationships and increasing your influence within the CAC sphere. Appreciative Inquiry, recognizing and saluting strengths in ourselves and others, careful generative listening, Oshry’s structural analyses, the reciprocal exchange of unique CAC influential “currencies” and structured peer support all foster expanding leadership capacity.

These resources have been proven effective and powerful in the uniquely challenging CAC Leadership context. We hope you delve into these resources systematically on your own or as a peer-group study course, and that you find this guide useful over the months and years to come.

CAC Leaders from every region have participated in LEC. We are delighted to share some of what we have learned from them about the challenges they face and the value of these concepts and tools in engaging the challenges. Some CAC Leaders may wish to participate in the LEC Project, or to be mentored by LEC participants in some future cycle. Please contact us with questions, comments and requests for further information about this guide or about the LEC Project:

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# CAC Leadership Competencies Assessment

Below are 27 leadership competencies grouped in 5 categories: Leading Change; Leading People; Building Coalitions/Communications; Driving Results; Demonstrating Business Acumen. Each is defined.

5 point rating scale where: 1 = v. low/significantly below expectations for role; 3 = acceptable/meets expectations; 5 = v. high/significantly exceeds. [Using ".5" to further discriminate is acceptable. For example a score of 3.5 would mean slightly beyond expectation.]

## A. Leading Change

Competency	Self	Other Respondents	
		Avg	Range
<b>2. Vision.</b> Builds a shared vision with others and acts as a catalyst for organizational change. Influences others to translate that vision into action.			
<b>3. Creativity &amp; Innovation.</b> Develops new insights into situations and applies innovative solutions to make organizational improvements; creates a work environment that encourages creative thinking and innovation. Designs and implements new or cutting-edge programs, collaborative processes, services.			
<b>4. Strategic Thinking.</b> Formulates effective plans. Examines policy issues and strategic plans with a long term perspective. Determines objectives and sets priorities. Anticipates threats & opportunities.			
<b>5. Continual Learning and Self-Development.</b> Seeks feedback from others and opportunities to master new knowledge. Masters new technical, professional and personal knowledge. Cares for self; effectively balances work and personal life.			
<b>6. Resilience and Flexibility.</b> Deals effectively with pressure and adversity, maintaining focus and energy. Adapts methods in response to new information, changed conditions, unexpected obstacles. Adjusts rapidly to new situations and recovers quickly from setbacks.			
<b>7. Service Motivation.</b> Creates and sustains a culture that encourages others to provide highest quality service. Enables others to acquire the tools and support needed to perform well. Shows a commitment to service and influences others toward a spirit of service and mission fulfillment.			
<b>"Leading Change" Average Scores</b>			
<b>8. Comments on this competency:</b>			

## B. Leading People

Competency	Self	Other Respondents	
		Avg	Range
<b>9. Conflict Management.</b> Identifies and takes steps to prevent potential situations that could result in unconstructive confrontations. Manages and resolves conflict and disagreement in a positive, constructive ways to minimize negative impact.			
<b>10. Cultural Awareness.</b> Initiates and manages cultural change within the organization and the team to impact effective collaboration and child-centeredness. Values cultural diversity and other individual strengths and differences in staff and partner agencies. Ensures that the organization build on these differences and that staff and partners are treated fairly and equitably.			
<b>11. Team Building.</b> Inspires, motivates, & guides others toward goal accomplishment. Consistently develops and sustains cooperative working relationships. Encourages and facilitates cooperation in the organization and with all stakeholders. Fosters commitment, team spirit, pride & trust. Develops leadership in others.			
<b>12. Integrity/Honesty.</b> Instills mutual trust & confidence. Creates a culture that fosters the highest ethics. Behaves fairly and ethically toward others and demonstrates responsibility and service commitment.			

Peer Learning and Executive Coaching For Leaders of Children's Advocacy Centers

<b>13. *Supporting.</b> Provides careful and nonjudgmental listening; encouragement; honest and constructive feedback; and helpful materials.			
<b>14. *Challenging.</b> Invites others into thoughtful discussion. Drives analysis deeper. Encourages experimentation with new insights and strategies.			
<i>*Mentoring competencies based on the work of Perrone-Ambrose Associates Mentors 2100 programs.</i>			
<b>“Leading People” Average Scores</b>			
<b>15. Comments on this competency:</b>			

**C. Building Coalitions/Communication**

Competency	Self	Other Respondents	
		Avg	Range
<b>16. Oral Communication.</b> Makes clear and convincing oral presentations to individuals or groups. Listens effectively and clarifies as needed. Facilitates open exchange of ideas and fosters open communication.			
<b>17. Written Communication.</b> Expresses facts and ideas in writing in a clear, organized and convincing way.			
<b>18. Influencing/Negotiating.</b> Effectively persuades others. Builds true consensus through give-and-take. Gains others’ cooperation in obtaining information and attaining goals. Facilitates “win-win.”			
<b>19. Partnering.</b> Develops networks and builds alliances. Engages in cross-functional activities. Collaborates across boundaries and finds common ground with a widening range of stakeholders. Leverages contacts to build and strengthen the organization and the team. Mentors and assists other leaders.			
<b>20. Political and Social Savvy.</b> Identifies and shares key trends (professional, economic, political and CAC movement) that affect the organization. Approaches each problem situation by developing a clear perception of internal and external political and social realities. Diplomatically plots path and creates alternatives based on these realities.			
<b>21. Interpersonal Skills.</b> Considers and responds appropriately to the needs, feelings, & capabilities of others in different situations. Is tactful, compassionate, respectful of others and their feelings.			
<b>“Building Coalitions/Communication” Average Scores</b>			
<b>22. Comments on this competency:</b>			

**D. Driving Results**

Competency	Self	Other Respondents	
		Avg	Range
<b>23. Accountability.</b> Assures that effective controls are developed and maintained to ensure the integrity of the organization. Holds self and others accountable for rules and responsibilities. Can be relied on to ensure that projects are completed on time and within budget. Monitors and evaluates plans. Focuses on results and measures outcomes.			
<b>24. Problem Solving.</b> Identifies and analyzes problems. Distinguishes between relevant and irrelevant information to make logical decisions. Provides solutions to individual and organizational problems.			
<b>25. Decisiveness.</b> Exercises good judgment by making sound, well-informed decisions. Perceives the impact and implications of decisions. Makes effective and timely decisions, even when data are limited &/or decisions predict unpleasant consequences. Is proactive and achievement oriented.			
<b>26. Child-Centered Service.</b> Balances interests of a variety of stakeholders in order to anticipate and meet the needs of child victims. Achieves quality outcomes & is committed to continuous improvement.			
<b>27. Innovation.</b> Identifies opportunities to develop new services and new opportunities within and outside of the organization. Willing to take risks, initiate actions to achieve benefit.			

Peer Learning and Executive Coaching For Leaders of Children's Advocacy Centers

<p><b>28. Technical Credibility.</b> Understands and appropriately applies regulations, policies and procedures related to child victims, stakeholder organizations, financials, buildings, and employment. Able to make sound hiring and capital resource decisions and to address training &amp; development needs. Understands linkages between administrative competencies and mission.</p>			
<b>“Driving Results” Average Scores</b>			
<p><b>29. Comments on this competency.</b></p>			

**E. Demonstrating Business Acumen**

Competency	Self	Other Respondents	
		Avg	Range
<p><b>30. Financial Management.</b> Demonstrates broad understanding of financial management and fundraising needed to ensure appropriate funding levels. Prepares, justifies, &amp;/or administers the budget for the program area. Uses cost-benefit thinking to set priorities. Monitors expenses in support of the program and mission. Identifies cost-effective approaches. Manages procurement and contracting as called for.</p>			
<p><b>31. Human Resource Management.</b> Assesses current and future staffing needs based on organizational goals &amp; budget realities. Using merit principles, ensures staff are appropriately selected, developed, utilized, appraised and rewarded. Takes corrective action as needed.</p>			
<p><b>32. Technology Management.</b> Uses efficient and cost-effective approaches to integrate technology into the workplace and improve performance. Develops strategies using new technology to enhance decisions and outcomes. Understands the impact of technological changes on the organization.</p>			
<b>“Business Acumen” Average Scores</b>			
<p><b>33. Comments on this competency:</b></p>			

**34. In order to be even more effective, what few “most important” things should do?**

## Performance Feedback Discussion (Revised April 2016)

### Introduction

These questions are designed to inspire reflection on your work performance over the past year, your satisfaction with your job responsibilities and your thoughts about your professional development and growth in the coming year. Our dialogue about your responses is an opportunity to discuss how we are working together and how we can make that relationship even better.

We are using an approach that builds on what we already do well here. In identifying our best practices and strongest virtues we will identify what we want to bring to all areas of our work here. Therefore, the questions will guide you to reflect upon positive experiences and what energizes and motivates you about your work.

### Questions

1. Describe a time this past year when you did what you consider to be your best work. Describe the situation.
  - a. What did you do that worked so well?
  - b. How did others in the organization help you to do your best?
  - c. In the past year, what did you accomplish that you are most proud of?
  - d. What did we accomplish here that you are most proud of?
2. Tell me about a time when you felt that your work was being valued and appreciated by your co-workers and supervisor, a time when you knew that you were making a significant contribution. Describe the situation.
  - a. What did you contribute?
  - b. How did you know that others appreciated you?
  - c. What did feeling valued and appreciated enable you to do?
3. Without being humble, what do you feel to be your greatest strengths?
  - a. What skills do you bring to your work?
  - b. What do you really love about what you do?
  - c. Why is this work important to you?
  - d. What skills are you hoping to develop in the coming year? What would you like to learn?
4. We all would do things differently with the benefit of hindsight. Describe something that you've done this past year, that with the benefit of hindsight, you would have done differently.
  - a. How would you handle the same situation today? Why?
  - b. What did you learn or discover about yourself?
5. Describe a time in the past year when you were unusually excited and charged up about the work you were doing here.
  - a. What or who helped that to happen?
  - b. What could we create in your current job to provide you with that same level of motivation and excitement?
  - c. If you could do anything you want to do here, and have a great impact on the organization and the community, what would it be?

### Organization Development and Coaching



6. When you think of our relationship, what are the things that I do or say that really help you to do and be your best?
  - a. Give me an example of when you felt supported by me - what did I do or say?
  - b. When did I help you with feedback that you found useful - what did I do or say?
  - c. In the past year, what has surprised you about my style?
  - d. Think of an instance in the past year when I created an environment that encouraged you to perform to the best of your abilities.
  - e. What do you wish that I did more of in my role (as Executive Director; as Associate Director, etc)?
  - f. If you could change three things about my approach, what would they be?
7. Imagine that it is 3 years from now and our organization is thriving! You are doing exactly what you want to be doing. You and we have had an impact beyond your wildest dreams.
  - a. What have you accomplished?
  - b. Describe to me what you see going on.
  - c. What are you doing in your job?
  - d. What are others doing?
  - e. What is the impact? What has the organization accomplished?

### **Additional Performance Feedback Questions**

*(Adapted from AI List Serve, 2012)*

1. Considering all of your objectives, what are you proud of, what have you accomplished, and what are you doing that works?
  - a. Give yourself credit for every little thing you do that brings you a feeling of success, to even the smallest degree, in any work situation and be specific.
2. What contributed to these successes?
  - a. What has allowed you to do your best work? (consider your colleagues, your environment, your training, opportunities, motivating conversations, etc)
3. How have you changed?
  - a. Think about yourself at the beginning of the year and the person you are today. How have you changed? Again, give yourself credit for every little improvement in your professional competencies or personal effectiveness.
  - b. What did you do that helped you improve? The activities may have occurred at work, home or in the community.
4. Now think beyond your given objectives. In your work here and as a member of a greater community, what achievements, accomplishments, or activities are you proud of?
5. To make yourself even more effective in the future, what do you want to continue to do, do more of, do better, or do differently?
  - a. Of all the items listed and described above, which ones are you inspired to act on?
  - b. What kind of support will you need to accomplish these things?

## **Organization Development and Coaching**

# The Thinking Environment ...

**Everything we do begins with thinking. If our thinking is good, our decisions are good, our actions are good, our outcomes are good.**

**So, what does it take for us to think for ourselves - with rigour, imagination, courage and grace?**

After years of observation we have noticed that the single most important factor in whether people can think for themselves well is how they are being treated by the people with them while they are thinking.

Ten behaviours seem to help the most. We call them The Ten Components of a Thinking Environment.

To embody them is to be a Thinking Environment for people around you.

To apply them to the structures of work with people in pairs and groups is to improve the quality of everyone's thinking and of the outcome of every interaction.

A Thinking Environment not only produces the best practical results of people's time together, It also dignifies, lifts, and lets soar the human mind and spirit.

One of the most valuable things we can offer each other  
is the framework in which to think for ourselves

# The TEN COMPONENTS

## 1. ATTENTION

- Listening with palpable respect and without interruption

## 2. EQUALITY

- Treating each other as thinking peers
- Giving equal turns and attention
- Keeping agreements and boundaries

## 3. EASE

- Offering freedom from internal rush or urgency

## 4. APPRECIATION

- Offering genuine acknowledgement of a person's qualities
- Practicing a 5:1 ratio of appreciation to criticism

## 5. ENCOURAGEMENT

- Giving courage to go to the cutting edge of ideas by moving beyond internal competition

## 6. FEELINGS

- Allowing sufficient emotional release to restore thinking

## 7. INFORMATION

- Supplying the facts
- Dismantling denial

## 8. DIVERSITY

- Welcoming divergent thinking and diverse group identities

## 9. INCISIVE QUESTIONS

- Removing assumptions that limit our ability to think for ourselves clearly and creatively

## 10. PLACE

- Creating a physical environment that says back to people, "You matter".

# Thinking Enhancers

## We think best when:

- we know we are respected
- we trust our own intelligence
- our minds are free of fear
- our ideas will affect a specific outcome
- we are seeking the best idea, not trying to win
- people show interest and delight in us
- we have accurate and complete information
- we are in charge and not being exploited
- we are not rushed
- our questions are welcomed
- we are asked incisive questions
- we are engaged in work that expresses our values
- we are in active pursuit of our dreams and goals
- stereotypes and oppressive attitudes are not tolerated
- we are at ease
- we think well of ourselves
- everyone in the group is given a chance to think and speak
- we know specifically how we are appreciated
- the physical environment says back to use, "You matter"
- we are encouraged to think beyond the usual
- our physical bodies are comfortable and respected

# Thinking Inhibitors

**We think least well when we are in the presence of:**

- Ridicule
- Competition
- Intimidation
- Perfectionism
- Cynicism
- Criticism
- Powerlessness
- Self-doubt
- Formality
- Physical discomfort
- Seduction
- Low expectations
- Addiction
- Stereotyping
- Pity

# Rounds in a Thinking Environment

Everyone matters.

Regardless of power differentials and hierarchical placement, everyone's thinking matters because getting everyone's best thinking produces best results.

The best way to get the best thinking from everyone is to populate the meeting with systematic uninterrupted Rounds. Rounds increase the generative nature of the group's thinking. Rounds also usually produce superior ideas in less time.

A Round is a simple enough concept, but it requires these four actions from the Chair:

1. Decide first what the question is that people will be addressing in the Round
2. Determine the direction of the Round (clockwise, anti-clockwise)
3. Ask for a volunteer to begin the Round
4. Remind people that no one speaks again until the Round is completed

If you do only one thing to improve the thinking in groups, institute Rounds. And be sure to decide first on the question.

# Generative Attention – Transformative Listening

## Attention is an act of creation

Attention from one person generates thinking in another person  
Listening to ignite is different from listening to reply

## Attention is also paradox

When you give Attention of this calibre:

- *You are so present you become invisible*
- *You matter profoundly because you do not matter at all*
- *You do not need to be needed but are needed entirely*
- *You are essential, and you are irrelevant*

## In practice:

To be interrupted is not good

To get lucky and not be interrupted is better

But **to know** you will not be interrupted allows you truly to think for yourself

Transformative listening is nearly a work of art. It comes from genuine interest in where the person will go next in their thinking. It comes from your courage to trust their intelligence.

Adopt this attitude and general behaviour as you listen:

- *Settle back*
- *Keep your eyes on the eyes of the person as they speak*
- *Cultivate fascination with what they will say next*
- *Achieve a composure that is wildly dynamic*
- *Do not interrupt*
- *Trust that not uttering a word is one of the most effective things you can do*
- *Know that your job is to help the person think for themselves, not to think for them*
- *Remember that the expression of feelings is often part of the thinking process*
- *Be aware that much of what they say will be the result of your effect on them*

In the quiet presence of your attention, respect and ease, important things can happen for the person thinking. Fresh ideas can emerge; confusion can dissipate; painful feelings can subside; creativity can explode.

It does not matter whether you think you know what the person will say before they say it. Do not interrupt them or stop them. What matters is what happens for them **because they say it.**

Enjoy this expertise. It is subtle, but powerful.



Growing Leaders for the Public Service

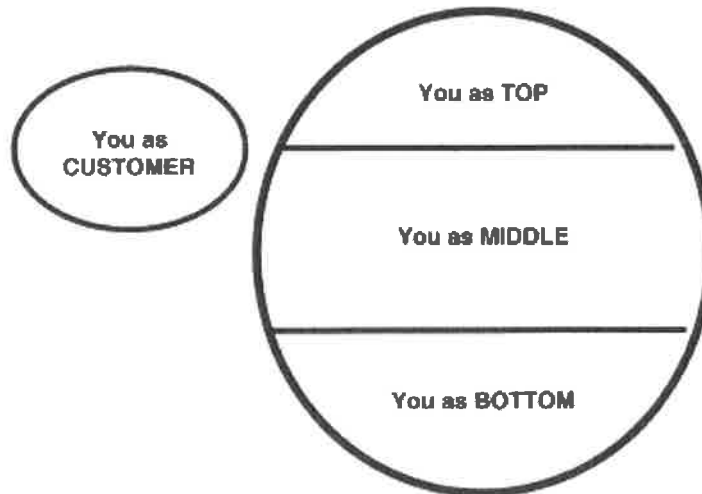
# TOTAL SYSTEM POWER

**Developers, Fixers, Integrators, and Validators**

*What each of us can do in our multiple roles as Tops, Middles, Bottoms, and Customers to create a system with outstanding capacity to survive and develop.*

*By Barry Oshry*

## We are all Tops, Middles, Bottoms, and Customers



Top, Middle, Bottom, and Customer are *conditions* all of us face in whatever position we occupy.

In certain interactions, we are Top when we have designated responsibility (accountability) for some piece of the action whether it's the whole organization, a division within it, a department, a project team, or a classroom.



In other interactions, we are Bottom when we are experiencing problems with our condition and/or with the condition of the system, problems that we think higher ups ought to be taking care of but are not. We can be Bottom at any level of the organization.

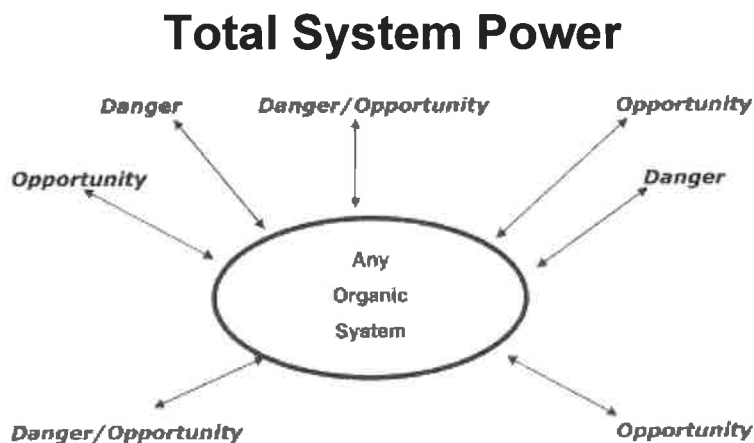
In other interactions, we are Middle, when we are experiencing conflicting demands, priorities, and pressures coming at us from two or more individuals or groups.

And in still other interactions, we are Customer, when we are looking to some other person or group for a product or service we need in order to move our work ahead.

Even in the most complex, multilevel, multifunctional organizations, each of us is constantly moving in and out of Top/Middle/Bottom/Customer conditions. In each of these conditions there are unique opportunities for contributing to total system power; and in each there are pitfalls that readily lead us to forfeit those contributions.

In this paper we will examine:

1. the unique contributions we can make to total system power when we are in Top, Middle, Bottom, and Customer conditions,
2. the pitfalls in each condition that can cause us to forfeit those contributions, and
3. how we can avoid those pitfalls while working together to create systems with outstanding capacities to survive and develop.



1. **The fundamental business of all human systems is survival and development.** Systems exist in and interact with their environments. Their fundamental business is to **survive** -- to continue their existence -- and to **develop** -- to realize their full potential, to become all that they can be. This is true of any living system whether that system is the corner grocery, the

mega corporation, the military, a sports team, a religious denomination, or you. The challenge is: survive and develop.

**2. Systems survive and develop by coping with dangers and prospecting among opportunities.** Systems exist in environments of danger -- conditions that can threaten their survival or limit their development possibilities -- and opportunity -- conditions that potentially support survival and development. Systems survive and develop by creating mechanisms and processes for coping with the dangers and prospecting among the opportunities. Powerful systems are systems with outstanding capacities for coping and prospecting.

**3. Systems are systems within systems within systems.** An organization is a complex of systems within systems within systems. The organization as a whole exists in its environment and its business is to cope with the dangers and prospect among the opportunities of that environment. Within the organization are other entities (sub-systems), each of which exists in its environment of dangers and opportunities, and the business of each is to survive and develop by coping and prospecting with these dangers and opportunities. (See, for example, *Act III: Seeing Patterns of Process* in Seeing Systems: Unlocking the Mysteries of Organizational Life, for a description of the unique environments occupied by Top, Middle, and Bottom groups.)

**4. In our multi-faceted roles, both our system power opportunities and the pitfalls we face vary depending on which constellation we are experiencing. And we may be experiencing several of these simultaneously.** For example,

in one constellation, we are Bottom, on the receiving end of deep budget cuts coming from above;

at the same time, we are Middle torn between requests for resources from our workers and pressures to do more with less from our immediate manager;

simultaneously, we are still Top who is being held accountable for the morale and output of our work group;

in the meantime, we may also be Customer, who is awaiting long delayed delivery on the new computer system we promised our group.

So, in the moment we are experiencing four different conditions: Top, Middle, Bottom, and Customer. And each of these conditions carries its own agenda; each is positioned to make its unique contribution to Total System Power.

As Top, the potential is to function as **Developer**,

as Bottom, it is to function as **Fixer**,

as Middle, as **Integrator**,

and as Customers as **Validator**.

## **Our System Power Potential and How We Sabotage It**

### **Tops as System Developers**

When we're Top, our unique system power potential is to be System **Developers**, that is, to strengthen the capacity of that system for which we are accountable such that it is better able to cope and prospect in its environment. Our work as Top is to create a system in which all members are knowledgeable about the system's condition – the dangers and opportunities in its environment, all feel responsible for the system's survival and development, and all are developing and using their full potential in doing the work of the system toward that end. As Tops, some of the ways we develop such systems are:

1. We inform system members; we share the big picture—the dangers and opportunities in the system's environment;
2. We involve system members in dealing with both the dangers and opportunities the system is facing; the more critical the issue, the more we need to involve them;
3. We ask system members for help, draw them in on issues, problems, dilemmas we are experiencing, and solicit their input on the dangers and opportunities they see;
4. We give system members big “games” to play, important challenges that both contribute to the system's capacity and are arenas for members to develop.
5. We coach system members, helping them identify and overcome their weaknesses and develop their strengths such that they are better able to help the system cope and prospect.

**How we sabotage ourselves as Tops.** When problems hit, not always, not every time, but with great regularity, we suck responsibility up to ourselves and away from others. The more critical the issue, the more likely we are to suck it up. It's not like a choice we make; more like a reflex. It's simply crystal clear that we are responsible for resolving the problem.

By sucking responsibility up to ourselves and away from others, as Tops we diminish our potential as system developers:

1. We limit the brainpower and other resources that can be brought to bear on issues the system is facing;
2. We become so involved in everything that major dangers and opportunities go unaddressed;
3. We diminish system-wide responsibility by reinforcing the belief that we are responsible and others are not;
4. We deprive others of the big challenges that could become important arenas of personal growth and development. The more we suck up to ourselves, the more we disable others, diminishing their potential contributions.

The reflex response to suck up responsibility may be supported by other factors:

1. Our belief that this is what leadership is: bearing the burden, sparing the others;
2. The culture in which we exist supports the above belief;
3. Our fear of looking weak;
4. Our concern that creating responsibility in others could lead to unexpected problems for which we would still be held responsible.

Whatever factors reinforce this pattern, the results are the same. The capacity of the system for which we are accountable remains underdeveloped with the cost being decreased coping and prospecting.

## **Bottoms as System Fixers**

When we're Bottom, our unique system power potential is to be system **Fixers**. We are the ones who are experiencing things that are wrong with our condition and things that are wrong with the system, all of which, so long as they remain untended, are diminishing the capacity of the system to cope and prospect. As Bottom, we are uniquely situated for identifying these problem issues and mobilizing the resources – our own and others' - necessary for correcting them. To Fixers, problems become projects to be worked on. Some of the ways we function as Fixers are:

1. We let higher-ups know about the problems we see and our willingness to work at correcting these;

2. We clarify for them the costs these problems have for ourselves, others, and the system;
3. We use our closeness to the situation to elaborate a vision of what actions could be taken and the consequences these actions could have for the system.
4. We see ourselves as central players in helping the system cope and prospect – to avoid the dangers it is facing and take advantage of its opportunities.

**How we sabotage ourselves as Bottoms.** Not always, not every time, but with great regularity, when there are problems with our condition and the condition of the system, we reflexively hold higher-ups responsible for them. End of story. Again, it's often not a choice, more like a reflex. It's crystal clear to us that *they* are responsible, not us.

In doing so, we diminish our capacity as system Fixers in several ways:

1. Our capacity for solving system problems is underdeveloped and underused;
2. We leave the solution of these problems to people who are more remote from and likely to be less invested in their solution;
3. We increase the likelihood that problems will continue.

The reflex response to hold others responsible for these problems may be supported by other factors such as:

1. The culture of the system is to regularly look upward for the solution to problems; no matter how high up you go, there's always some "them" to blame;
2. To do otherwise could put me at odds with my peers who are steadfast in holding others responsible;
3. If we assume responsibility for fixing problems, we run the risk of failure; blaming others keeps us safe;
4. Higher-ups discourage us from getting involved in *their* business.

To the extent to which this pattern persists, the system is denied our resources to help it ward off threats and take advantage of opportunities.

## **Middles as System Integrators**

When we're Middles our unique system power potential is to be system **Integrators**. We are, potentially, the system's web, akin to the circulatory and nervous systems of the human

organism: connecting all the parts, coordinating their interaction, ensuring the flow of essential information and nutrients throughout the system.

Middles integrate the system by moving back and forth between **dispersing** and **integrating**. When we disperse, we move out to lead, manage, supervise, advise, coach other individuals and groups. When we integrate, we join together with our peers to:

1. Share information (intelligence) about our parts of the system;
2. Use the collective information to diagnose system issues—new dangers that are looming, new opportunities that are emerging;
3. Strengthen the coping and prospecting capacities of system parts by sharing information and best practices gathered through integration;
4. Coordinate system functioning, reduce unwanted duplication of effort, and move resources and knowledge to where they are needed in the system.

Integration improves the quality of our dispersing: we are stronger, supported, informed about system wide conditions, better able to provide others with the information and resources they need to do their work.

**How we sabotage ourselves as Integrators.** As Middles, we sabotage ourselves by reflexively connecting with certain parts of the system while reducing our connectivity to other parts. For example, our primary connection (allegiance) may be to those above us with the loss of connectivity with those below; or the reverse could also be the case. *The connection we are most vulnerable to losing is that with one another.* (See [In the Middle](#).)

When the **disperse/integrate** web shreds or fails to develop, we diminish our capacity as system integrators in several ways:

1. Individually, we Middles are weaker, unsupported, and less knowledgeable about wider system issues;
2. Because of our limited knowledge we provide lower quality service to those we lead, manage, coach, supervise;
3. System parts lose their connectedness resulting in inconsistency in information and treatment, destructive competition, and redundant resources.
4. The system as a whole is likely to be less coordinated;

5. And because of issues we either fail to handle or create, more items fall into the lap of our Top.

In addition to our losing our connectedness reflexively, there are other factors that contribute to our dis-integration:

1. The culture of the organization - neither in its role definitions nor its reward systems - supports middle integration; we are hired, promoted, and rewarded for dispersing but not for integrating.
2. In the dis-integrated state, we fall into our “I” mentality in which we experience ourselves as separate from our peers. In the “I” mentality we each tend to feel:

- ...unique
- ...we have little in common with others
- ...competitive with others
- ...evaluative of others often on surface issues
- ...there is no collective power among us.

So we fall into this vicious cycle in which being dis-integrated leads to the “I” mentality, and the “I” mentality reinforces our remaining disintegrated. (This pattern is described in more detail in Seeing Systems, 2nd edition, pp. 156-158.)

The consequences of this dis-integrated pattern include: weakening individuals Middles, reducing the quality of their contributions to others, adding to the complexity and burden of their Tops, producing inconsistencies and lack of coordination among systems parts, all of which diminishes the coping and prospecting capacity of the system.

## Customers as System Validators

When we're Customers – whether of internal organizational providers or external providers - our unique system power potential is to be system **Validators**. We are the ones who are experiencing the delivery of the products or services we need in order to move our work ahead. We are the ones who are in the best position to evaluate the quality of that delivery process: Are we getting what we wanted, are we getting it when we wanted it, at the price we expected, and at the quality we needed? As Validators, we are in the best position to strengthen the coping and prospecting capacity of the system by strengthening the quality of delivery processes. Some of the ways we function as Validators are:

1. We indicate to providers our willingness to work in partnership with them with the goal of generating the highest quality products and services;

2. We hold delivery systems – internal and external - to high standards; if quality lags, we do not settle;
3. We provide detailed feedback regarding delivery, what works and what doesn't;
4. We make suggestions for improvement;
5. We see that our feedback gets to the right people, those who are responsible for delivery and are in a position to influence it;
6. We stay close, developing a positive partnership relationship with those who directly provide delivery;
7. We don't wait until final delivery and then judge it; as part of our initial contract, we maintain contact with the delivery process on an ongoing basis.

**How we sabotage ourselves as Validators.** When we are in the Customer condition, we reflexively hold the delivery system responsible for delivery; *it* is responsible, we are not. If delivery is substandard, it's crystal clear to us that the delivery system is at fault, not us. After all, we are the Customer; we are entitled. So we put full responsibility for service improvement on the Provider. By limiting our responsibility for and involvement in the delivery process:

1. The system's capacity for delivering and receiving high quality products and services is diminished.
2. we reduce the likelihood of getting what we want;
3. we run the risk of worsening the relationship between provider and customer as unsatisfactory delivery piles up on unsatisfactory delivery;
4. we fail to engage in the provider/customer dialogues that can yield high quality products and services;
5. we may waste considerable time and energy searching for the perfect provider when we have the opportunity to create such a relationship with the providers we already have.

The reflex response to hold delivery systems responsible for delivery may be supported by other factors, chiefly the accepted wisdom both in one's organization and in the larger culture that the Customer is always right. The notion that as Validators we should be partners in delivery often runs counter-cultural and supports us in feeling that as Customers we are *entitled*.



## **Steps to Analyze and Form a Partnership**

- 1) Define the relationship
- 2) Identify the goal of the partnership
- 3) Analyze interests, theirs and yours
- 4) Connect with the person
- 5) Express, explore and acknowledge your own and other's interests and clarify expectations
- 6) Clarify concerns and issues
- 7) Notice and address resistance
- 8) Create agreement and/or address disagreement
- 9) Identify next steps

## **Analyzing a Partnership**

After reviewing your structure and the role you most identify with, as Top or Middle, choose a partnership that you want to improve. Answer the following questions with that person and relationship in mind.

**1) Define the Relationship**

- a. Are you in a reporting relationship with this person? A peer? Is this person a rep of one of your partner agencies? Other?
- b. Where would you say you are in relation to this person – Top, Middle or Bottom?
- c. How do you define the role you usually choose? (Expert, Pair of hands, Collaborative?)

**2) Define the Goal**

- a. What are you trying to accomplish through this partnership?
- b. What would define success?

**3) Analyze interests—theirs and yours**

Their Interests:

- a. What really matters to this person?
- b. If you were in his/her shoes, what would you think and want?
- c. What does she/he have to gain or lose?
- d. What role do you think this person sees you in: Expert, Pair of hands, Partner/Collaborator?

Your Interests:

- a. What really matters to you?
- b. What do you have to gain or lose?

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- 4) **Connect with the person**
  - a. What have you already done to connect to this person?
  - b. What else might be helpful?
  
- 5) **Express, explore and acknowledge own and other's interests and clarify expectations**
  - a. What do you think this person wants from you?
  - b. What do you want?
    - a. What common interests might there be?
    - b. Which common interest(s) is a strong foundation for partnership?
  
- 6) **Clarify Concerns and Issues**
  - a. What are you concerned about?
  - b. What might he/she be concerned about?
  
- 7) **Notice and Address Resistance**
  - a. What is the likelihood that this person might be resistant?
  - b. What might be his/her underlying concerns?
  - c. How might you address them?
  
- 8) **Identify areas of agreement and disagreement**
  - a. What common ground do you expect?
  - b. Where might there be areas of disagreement (different than resistance)?

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- 9) **Identify Next Steps**
  - a. What information do you still need? Where will you get it?
  - b. What is the next step?
  - c. If the next step is a conversation, what should it entail, who should be there and when will you have it?

NRCAC—LEC VI ♦ March 13 & 14, 2013 ♦

Facilitated by Martha Lask, MSOD ♦ Anne Lynn, ACSW ♦ Maria Gallagher, MSW

<http://www.nrcac.com/LEC/> ♦ [www.marthalask.com](http://www.marthalask.com)

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### LEC Peer Consultation Agenda for a Group of Four – Six (this is a variation on the Full LEC Agenda)

Activity	Time
<b>1. Brief Check-in:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What do you want the group to know about how you are?</li> </ul>	<b>5 min</b>
<b>2. Confirm one or two presenters. Others are Facilitator, Observer &amp; Consultants</b>	<b>5 min</b>
<b>3. Facilitator Reviews Group Agreements &amp; Conference Call Behavior</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Speak freely from private place</li> <li>▪ Turn away from computer</li> <li>▪ Focus on this call</li> <li>▪ Describe your non-verbals: If you are “thinking” or pausing: say what’s happening</li> <li>▪ Say your name</li> <li>▪ No speaker phone</li> </ul>	<b>5 min</b>
<b>4. Group Member leads group in Centering Activity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sit with feet flat on the floor</li> <li>▪ Close your eyes or downcast, whichever is comfortable</li> <li>▪ Take a deep breath and exhale slowly</li> <li>▪ Relax your hands on your thighs, slowly rotate your neck, stretch out the tension in your face, rotate your shoulders front and back, sit up as tall as you can</li> <li>▪ Feel yourself connected to the ground and the earth through your feet</li> <li>▪ Now feel yourself connected to the sky through the ceiling</li> <li>▪ Feel yourselves 360 in the space: notice your back and your sides as well as your front</li> <li>▪ Strong back, soft front, open heart</li> <li>▪ Take another deep breath and exhale slowly</li> <li>▪ Now, connect to yourself and bring yourself to the present</li> <li>▪ Reach your attention out through your heart to your colleagues on the phone and feel the connection between you</li> <li>▪ Prepare yourself to listen with your whole self</li> </ul>	<b>5 min</b>
<b>i. 5. Each Presenter has 25-30 min Consultation Time:</b> <b>Consultation Process and Key Skills and Tools</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Person reports <u>briefly</u> on actions taken on last issue if relevant.</li> <li>2. Colleague <u>briefly</u> presents issue, &amp; requests specific assistance.</li> <li>3. Group <b>listens deeply, with compassion</b>, w/o interruption (except for clarification).</li> <li>4. Group helps clarify the issue through <b>questioning</b> and <b>challenging assumptions</b>.</li> <li>5. Group offers assistance, with open questions to help <b>person</b> discover what’s next, <b>NOT</b> to solve person’s problem..</li> <li>6. Group checks to make sure colleague feels heard and helped.</li> <li>7. Colleague summarizes and states immediate action steps.</li> </ol>	<b>75-90 min</b>
<b>6. Key Facilitating Questions: ones, to which we cannot possibly know the answer</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. “What would be helpful right now?”</li> <li>2. “What assumptions are you making that might be limiting your thinking?”</li> <li>3. “What is MOST important to you right now?”</li> <li>4. “What is the worst that could happen?”</li> <li>5. “What are the benefits and downsides?”</li> <li>6. “Are we solving the problem or helping you”</li> <li>7. “How will you make that decision?”</li> </ol>	
<b>8. Presenters Review Actions &amp; Insights</b>	<b>5 min</b>

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<b>9. Evaluation &amp; Closing</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. What worked in this session?</li><li>2. Did we get to the real issue?</li><li>3. Did we push ourselves to ask or say what we <u>really</u> think?</li><li>4. Did we solve the problem or help the person?</li><li>5. Anything we want to do differently next time?</li><li>6. Confirm date and time for next call</li></ol>	<b>5 min</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100-120 min (1¾ - 2 hrs)</b>

LEC Peer Consultation Model adapted from Parker Palmer, founder of the Center for Courage and Renewal, Seattle; Carter McNamara, Authenticity Consulting, Minneapolis; Perrone-Ambrose, Consultants, Chicago, Ill; Liz Lerman, Choreographer, Tacoma, MD; Martha Lask and Peter Norlin from Authentic Movement practice developed by Mary Starks Whitehouse; Feedback from LEC groups.