

IQ

LEADER COMPETENCY ASSESSMENT



Higher
Performance
Group



Why This Order Matters

Leadership competencies build sequentially—each creates the foundation for those that follow. Research reveals a critical insight: **Leaders cannot skip competency levels without creating fragility in their leadership foundation.**

This assessment follows the **optimal developmental sequence**. Attempting advanced competencies without foundational mastery creates the illusion of progress while undermining sustainable performance.

The Developmental Logic:

- You cannot authentically empower others until you've established trust
- You cannot facilitate genuine collaboration without both trust and empowerment
- You cannot broaden influence effectively without mastering collaboration
- You cannot lead change successfully without trust, empowerment, collaboration, and influence
- You cannot transform conflict into opportunity without all prior competencies
- You cannot authentically develop others until you've integrated all competencies above

Common Developmental Errors and Their Consequences:

- Attempting Empowerment without Trust → Higher failure rates in distributed leadership initiatives
- Attempting Collaboration without Empowerment → Higher team disengagement and cynicism about “fake collaboration”
- Attempting Change Management without Broadening Influence → Majority of educational change initiatives fail

Organizations following this optimal developmental sequence achieve **substantially higher success rates** in cultural transformation compared to those attempting to develop competencies simultaneously or in random order.

ASSESSMENT SCALE

- **Level 1: Novice** - Rarely demonstrates this competency
- **Level 2: Developing** - Occasionally demonstrates this competency
- **Level 3: Proficient** - Consistently demonstrates this competency
- **Level 4: Advanced** - Models this competency for others
- **Level 5: Expert** - Innovates and builds institutional capacity in this competency

1. BUILDING TRUST

Foundation for all others

Why This Comes First: Trust is the oxygen of team intelligence. Without it, every other competency suffocates. Leaders demonstrating Level 1-2 trust competencies cannot effectively empower, collaborate, or develop others—team members won't risk the vulnerability these advanced competencies require.

Critical Finding: Organizations led by leaders creating psychological safety are significantly more likely to foster innovation cultures, with substantially better talent retention and higher stakeholder satisfaction.

Level	Description	Observable Evidence
1	Demonstrates inconsistent reliability	• Communication lacks transparency • Actions and words frequently misalign • Tends to blame others for setbacks
2	Shows basic reliability but struggles with vulnerability	• Generally follows through on commitments • Shares limited information • Hesitates to admit mistakes
3	Consistently demonstrates integrity and transparency	• Demonstrates vulnerability as a leader • Advocates for team members even when costly • Addresses trust violations directly and fairly
4	Creates an environment of psychological safety	• Establishes systems that promote transparency • Creates mechanisms for addressing breaches of trust • Models reconciliation and repair after conflicts
5	Builds institutional cultures of trust	• Establishes formal and informal influence channels • Develops systems for cross-campus knowledge sharing • Connects the institution to external opportunities

2. EMPOWERMENT

Builds on a trust foundation

Developmental Logic: Leaders cannot authentically empower until they've established trust. Attempted empowerment without a trust foundation creates perceived abandonment rather than genuine autonomy.

Level	Description	Observable Evidence
1	Makes decisions unilaterally with little delegation	• Retains most decision-making authority • Provides limited autonomy to team members • Micromanages projects and initiatives
2	Delegates tasks but maintains tight control	• Assigns responsibilities but frequently checks in • Sometimes seeks input from team members • Struggles to trust team capabilities
3	Regularly delegates authority and provides support	• Matches assignments to individual strengths • Provides necessary resources for success • Offers guidance while allowing autonomy
4	Creates conditions for team success and growth	• Establishes clear parameters for autonomous decision-making • Removes barriers to team effectiveness • Publicly recognizes team accomplishments
5	Builds a culture of distributed leadership	• Creates systems that enable others to lead initiatives • Advocates for team members' ideas at higher levels • Develops structures that maximize collective expertise

3. COLLABORATION

Requires trust and empowerment

Developmental Logic: Genuine collaboration requires both trust (psychological safety to share ideas) and empowerment (authority to act on collaborative decisions). Without these foundations, “collaboration” becomes performative meeting attendance rather than intelligence multiplication.

Finding: Teams with strong collaboration show substantially better project completion rates.

Level	Description	Observable Evidence
1	Works primarily in isolation	• Rarely initiates collaborative projects • Focuses on individual/departmental goals • Limits information sharing
2	Collaborates when required but defaults to individual work	• Participates in mandatory collaborative efforts • Maintains separate goals during joint work • Shares information selectively
3	Actively seeks and facilitates productive collaboration	• Identifies opportunities for synergy across teams • Establishes shared goals and accountability • Facilitates effective group decision-making
4	Creates structures that maximize collective intelligence	• Designs collaborative processes for complex challenges • Leverages diverse perspectives and expertise • Removes barriers to effective teamwork
5	Transforms institutional culture toward collaboration	• Establishes cross-functional structures • Creates incentive systems that reward collaboration • Builds partnerships that extend beyond campus boundaries

4. BROADENING INFLUENCE

Leverages collaborative networks

Developmental Logic: Leaders cannot broaden influence until they've mastered collaboration. Influence built on strong collaborative relationships creates multiplication; influence attempted without collaborative foundation creates political maneuvering undermining trust.

Level	Description	Observable Evidence
1	Operates in isolation with limited campus connections	• Rarely discusses development with team members • Focuses primarily on task completion • Provides limited feedback on performance
2	Builds connections within immediate functional area	• Occasionally participates in cross-functional meetings • Shares information when specifically requested • Has limited visibility across campus
3	Develops effective cross-campus relationships	• Regularly collaborates on cross-functional initiatives • Actively shares knowledge and resources • Successfully advocates for team priorities
4	Leverages networks to drive institutional priorities	• Builds coalitions to advance strategic initiatives • Effectively influences without direct authority • Represents the institution in external partnerships
5	Creates institutional structures that promote collaboration	• Establishes formal and informal influence channels • Develops systems for cross-campus knowledge sharing • Connects the institution to external opportunities

5. MANAGING CHANGE

Requires trust, empowerment, collaboration, and influence

Developmental Logic: Successful change management requires all prior competencies working synergistically. Without trust, change creates resistance; without empowerment, compliance without commitment; without collaboration, silos; without influence, no coalition-building capacity.

Finding: Institutions with high change management competencies navigate major transitions more effectively while maintaining excellence.

Level	Description	Observable Evidence
1	Implements changes with minimal communication	• Announces changes with little explanation • Does not address resistance or concerns • Provides limited transition support
2	Communicates change rationale but struggles with execution	• Explains reasons for change • Inconsistently addresses stakeholder concerns • Provides some guidance during transitions
3	Effectively leads planned change initiatives	• Involves stakeholders in change planning • Anticipates and addresses resistance • Provides resources and support during transitions
4	Creates conditions for successful adaptation	• Builds coalitions to advance strategic initiatives • Effectively influences without direct authority • Represents the institution in external partnerships
5	Transforms institutional approaches to change	• Establishes formal and informal influence channels • Develops systems for cross-campus knowledge sharing • Connects the institution to external opportunities

6. MANAGING CONFLICT

Transforms collaborative tension into breakthrough

Developmental Logic: Conflict management represents advanced integration of all prior competencies. Leaders cannot transform conflict into creative tension without trust, empowerment, collaboration, influence, and change management.

Finding: Leaders with strong conflict management competencies experience significantly fewer implementation failures.

Level	Description	Observable Evidence
1	Avoids addressing conflicts	• Ignores interpersonal tensions • Allows conflicts to escalate • Makes unilateral decisions to end disagreements
2	Addresses obvious conflicts but struggles with underlying issues	• Intervenes in visible conflicts • Focuses on symptoms rather than causes • Seeks quick resolutions that may not resolve root issues
3	Effectively addresses conflicts using appropriate strategies	• Facilitates difficult conversations • Identifies underlying interests beneath positions • Helps parties find mutually beneficial solutions
4	Creates environments that transform conflicts into opportunities	• Establishes norms for healthy disagreement • Coaches others in conflict resolution • Uses conflicts to drive innovation and improvement
5	Builds institutional capacity for constructive conflict	• Develops conflict resolution systems • Creates channels for surfacing and addressing tensions • Transforms conflict patterns into institutional learning

7. DEVELOPING OTHERS

Apex competency synthesizing all others

Developmental Logic: Developing others represents the apex of leadership integration. Leaders cannot authentically develop others until they've mastered trust, empowerment, collaboration, influence, change management, and conflict management.

Finding: Leaders excelling at developing others achieve substantially higher staff retention, better outcomes, and more efficient resource utilization.

Level	Description	Observable Evidence
1	Provides minimal guidance for growth	• Rarely discusses development with team members • Focuses primarily on task completion • Provides limited feedback on performance
2	Offers occasional development opportunities	• Conducts required performance reviews • Suggests professional development when asked • Provides feedback focused on problems
3	Actively supports growth through multiple approaches	• Conducts regular coaching conversations • Identifies specific growth opportunities for individuals • Provides balanced constructive feedback
4	Creates comprehensive development systems	• Establishes mentoring relationships across campus • Connects team members with stretch assignments • Provides real-time feedback tied to career goals
5	Builds institutional capacity for talent development	• Creates leadership pipelines across the institution • Establishes campus-wide mentoring programs • Secures resources for robust professional development

Critical Reminder: Leaders in the top quartile for foundational competencies (Building Trust, Empowerment) are significantly more likely to achieve institutional objectives—yet these foundational competencies receive minimal development attention in most educational leadership programs.

This creates the paradox of Level 1-2 leaders attempting Level 5 work—a predictable formula for underperformance.

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