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Introduction: Welcome to the Self & Situational Assessment Tool

This tool will take you through a multi-step process for assessing how your personal leadership capabilities align with typical needs of rural health networks.

1. In **Step 1**, you will identify your strengths related to leadership capabilities – both *Traditional* and *Adaptive*.
2. In **Step 2**, you will determine the *Traditional* and *Adaptive* leadership capabilities needed to address challenges typically faced by rural health networks.
3. In **Step 3**, you will determine how your leadership capabilities "*FIT*" with those capabilities needed to guide rural health networks through these typical challenges.
4. In **Step 4**, you will explore how to develop *Distributed Leadership* among your Network members.

You'll also find suggestions at end of this tool to help you apply insights from the assessment to address your Network's leadership needs. Let's get started.

Step 1: Self Perception of Leadership Capabilities

Read the leadership capability statements. For each, select the **ONE** letter that is most true for you and your leadership capabilities at this point in your life and career.

A = This is very natural to me and I can do this effectively.

B = I have learned how to do this very well, though it's not my natural tendency.

C = This is not something I do well naturally nor do I feel like I have learned how do it effectively.

Traditional Leadership Capabilities (Technical Orientation)	Circle One
1 I can create practical work plans to accomplish desired outcomes.	A B C
2 I can effectively assign responsibilities to others for accomplishing key tasks in a timely manner.	A B C
3 I understand the HRSA grant requirements and can ensure that our Network uses its grant resources according to guidelines.	A B C
4 I can manage the processes necessary to produce high-quality deliverables required by the Network Planning Grant.	A B C
5 I can clarify strategies and outcomes in advance and strictly adhere to plans that demonstrate accountability.	A B C
6 I can ensure adherence to prescribed protocols when implementing evidence-based practices.	A B C
7 I can act strategically without input from others in areas where I have deep experience and expertise.	A B C

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Adaptive Leadership Capabilities	Circle One
8	I can help groups share their insights and have robust, productive conversations about complex challenges for which there is no obvious solution.	A B C
9	I can help reduce Network members' anxiety about ambiguous and uncertain future scenarios by constantly scanning the environment for relevant trends and anticipating possible implications for the Network.	A B C
10	I can use insights and lessons learned from previous actions to confidently adjust our Network structure, strategies, and work plans.	A B C
11	I can help Network members see how past actions and results (including "failures") can be used to develop strategies in a constantly changing environment.	A B C
12	I am willing and able to question my own assumptions and agendas and consider others' perspectives and needs.	A B C
13	I am comfortable learning as I go and experimenting to devise new solutions to persistent problems.	A B C
14	I can continuously build and learn from relationships with stakeholders at multiple levels.	A B C

Step 1A: Totals

Count the total number of A, B and C responses and fill in the table below.

Letter	Totals	Total of "Traditional"	Total of "Adaptive"
A (natural)			
B (learned)			
C (to learn)			

Step 1B: Summary

Is your natural leadership style generally more Traditional or Adaptive? Mark an "X" on the spectrum bar to best represent your natural leadership style. Then answer the three questions below.
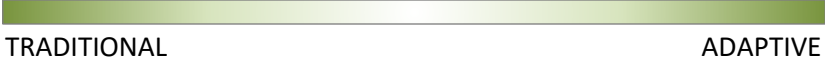
TRADITIONAL   **ADAPTIVE**

1. Which of the 14 statements from Step 1 reflects your most *natural* leadership capability? _____ (Enter statement #)

2. Which of the 14 statements from Step 1 reflects the *learned* leadership skill of which you have the greatest proficiency? _____ (Enter statement #)

3. Which of your capabilities, marked as "C" in Step 1, would you prioritize to help strengthen your leadership skills?

   Capability 1 _____ Capability 2 _____ Capability 3_____

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Step 2: Assessment of Network Situational Leadership Needs

- Read the 6 scenarios that describe situations often faced by rural health networks.
- For each of the scenarios, consider which leadership capabilities from Step 1 would best serve the situation described. It is very likely that these situational challenges may require a combination of both Traditional and Adaptive capabilities.
- Using the numbers assigned in Step 1, indicate the relevant capabilities in the right column.
- For each scenario, place an "X" somewhere along the colored spectrum to represent the type of leadership challenge described in each situation. Is the challenge Traditional? Adaptive? Or does the challenge include elements of both?

	Scenario	Leadership Capabilities Needed
1	Members of our Network Board are not engaged. Interest is waning. Fewer and fewer stakeholders attend the meetings. Only the lead organization is participating in the collection of data to inform strategic planning. TRADITIONAL ADAPTIVE	
2	Network members are very engaged and generate long lists of possible ways to collaborate and programs that might be implemented to improve health in the community. However, some members are feeling "antsy." They are ready for action and are growing weary of "just talking" about what to do. TRADITIONAL ADAPTIVE	
3	An initial task in our Network Planning Grant work plan was to hire a key staff person. The hiring committee has interviewed several prospects, but has not found the right candidate for the job. Deadlines for completing key deliverables are fast approaching. TRADITIONAL ADAPTIVE	
4	Board members have widely varying explanations of the causes and ideas for how to address an issue that is a primary focus of the Network There are also competing preferences for how to invest the grant funds. You are concerned that unspoken disagreements and discomfort will derail your ability to make progress. The Network has not yet developed a clear, agreed upon process for decision making. TRADITIONAL ADAPTIVE	
5	Members of your Network are very worried about the future given uncertainties in the health policy arena, constant changes in reimbursement, and persistent workforce shortages. They are nervous and unsure about what to do next. The options feel narrow and unstable. TRADITIONAL ADAPTIVE	
6	Your Network has identified a promising practice with well-documented evidence to apply in your community. The recommended protocols have been developed based on experience in other sites, none of which are rural. Your work plan must specify how the program will be translated and implemented in your community context. Your role is to ensure that the program is as effective and impactful as possible. TRADITIONAL ADAPTIVE	

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Step 3: Reflection on Your Personal Leadership "FIT"

Building and sustaining Networks requires effective leadership – both traditional and adaptive. As demonstrated in Step 2, certain leadership capabilities may be a good "fit" in one situation and not sufficient to resolve challenges or make progress in another. For the network situational challenges described above, consider whether your leadership capabilities are a "FIT" based on the scores you gave yourself in Step 1. Ask yourself the following questions to identify where your leadership style aligns with what is needed – if so, that's a "FIT". Where there is not a match between what is needed and your current leadership strengths, there may be opportunities for professional development and skill-building.

1. Where is the greatest alignment between your natural or learned capabilities and what the described Network Situational challenges require? Where is there "FIT"?

2. Where is your greatest need for continued learning or growth? Where is there the least "FIT"?

3. How might you develop the necessary Traditional and Adaptive capabilities? Learning by doing, carefully observing others, and working with a mentor are among the options for leadership development.

Step 4: Strategy for Distributed Leadership

Demands for Network Leadership are complex and dynamic. It is unlikely that any one person can meet every need. A key attribute of the Sustainable Network Model is leadership that is shared across Network members, rather than held by one person or entity within the Network. Reflect on the capabilities of your Network members. In the right-hand column of the table below, write the names of those members who demonstrate the Adaptive Leadership Capability described in the left-hand column.

Leadership Capabilities	Network Partners Who Demonstrate This Ability
Can help groups share their insights and have robust, productive conversations about complex challenges for which there is no obvious solution.	
Can help reduce Network members' anxiety about ambiguous and uncertain future scenarios by constantly scanning the environment for relevant trends and anticipating possible implications for the Network.	
Can use insights and lessons learned from previous actions to confidently adjust our Network structure, strategies and work plans.	
Can help Network members see how past actions and results (including "failures") can be used to develop strategies in a constantly changing environment.	
Is willing and able to question my own assumptions and agendas and consider others' perspectives and needs.	
Is comfortable learning as I go and experimenting to devise new solutions to persistent problems.	
Can continuously build and learn from relationships with stakeholders at multiple levels.	

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Answer the following questions to determine how you can promote shared leadership within your Network:

1. Which Adaptive Leadership capabilities are the strongest across your Network members?

2. How might you encourage members with these capabilities to take a greater leadership role in the Network?

3. Which, if any, Adaptive Leadership capabilities are not represented among your Network members? How might you develop the missing capabilities among your Network members?

Now What? Strategic Action Based on Assessment Insights

Now it is time to apply insights from this assessment to the issues facing your Network.

1. **Consider the actual challenges and issues** that must be addressed for your Network to be effective and sustainable.
2. **Use the concepts in this tool to assess** what leadership capabilities are needed to make progress. Are more traditional or adaptive approaches needed? Some combination of the two?
3. **Check for "FIT."** Do you and/or your network members possess the capabilities needed to move forward in your Network situation(s)? Is there "FIT"?
4. **If there *is* a "FIT":**
   - Apply the relevant leadership approach(es);
   - Reflect on and learn from your experiences to inform future leadership strategies; and
   - Stay aware of changing dynamics that may call for a shift in capabilities and leadership strategies.
5. **If there *is not* a "FIT":**
   - Seek opportunities to develop the needed leadership capabilities – individually and as a Network;
   - Learn from doing; and
   - Engage other Network members who may have the needed skills.
6. **Always encourage shared leadership and responsibility.** Shared leadership and responsibility will strengthen your collaboration, increase your impacts, and enhance your possibilities for sustainability.