LEADERSHIP FOUNDATIONS · SESSION 1 OF 10

Personal Strengths and Self-Awareness

Know your purpose, your values and your strengths so you can lead from who you really are.

A companion series for Neighborhood Leadership Cleveland participants



Leadership starts with knowing why you lead.

Self-awareness is the first fundamental of grassroots leadership. When you know your purpose, values and strengths, you make steadier choices and people trust where you are headed.

SESSION 1 · SELF-AWARENESS

Four layers of self-awareness

Purpose

Why you lead and what change you want to see on your block.

Values

What you will not compromise on, and what guides hard choices.

Strengths

What you naturally do well and where you bring the most energy.

Blind spots

How others experience you, including habits you may not notice.

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Free assessments to explore yourself

The official Myers-Briggs and CliftonStrengths are paid. These free options measure similar things.

Personality type

Open Jungian Type Scales (free MBTI-style), Truity TypeFinder, 16Personalities.

Strengths

VIA Character Strengths (24 strengths) and HIGH5 (your top five).

Career interests

O*NET Interest Profiler, OhioMeansJobs Career Profile Quiz.

Skills and values

CareerOneStop Skills Matcher and Work Values Matcher.

Conflict style

Free five-style conflict test based on the Thomas-Kilmann model.

Digital skills

Northstar Digital Literacy: free, no account needed.

How to use assessment results

Do

- Treat results as a starting point for reflection
- Compare results with how others see you
- Look for patterns across two or three tools
- Use results to build a balanced team

Don't

- Treat a result as a fixed label
- Use results to judge or exclude others
- Pay for a report you do not need
- Assume one test explains everything

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Clarifying your purpose

1 **Remember**

A moment that made you care about your community.

2 **Name it**

The issue or people that moment points to.

3 **Picture it**

What your block looks like if you succeed.

4 **Commit**

What you will do, starting this season.

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Values card sort

A group exercise using the free Personal Values Card Sort (University of New Mexico).

Sort

Place each value card in very important, important, or not important.

Narrow

Choose your top five from the very important pile.

Share

Tell a partner a story about one value in action.

Test

Where do your daily choices match your top five? Where do they not?

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Using AI to reflect

- AI can ask good questions. The answers are yours.
- Do not paste private test reports with personal details.
- Use it after the assessments, not instead of them.

REFLECTION PROMPT

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My top strengths from a free strengths survey
are [list]. My top values are [list]. I lead
in [neighborhood], Cleveland, on [issue].

Ask me five questions, one at a time, that
help me see how my strengths and values can
shape my leadership, and one blind spot I
should watch for.
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ACTIVITY · 25 MIN

Write your leadership statement

1. Review your purpose notes and top five values.
2. Look at your strengths results.
3. Fill in the statement at right.
4. Read it aloud to a partner.
5. Revise one word that does not sound like you.

FILL IN THE BLANKS

I lead because
[purpose].

I am guided by
[two or three values].

I bring
[two strengths]

to help
[people or place]

become
[vision].

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What to remember

- Know your purpose, values, strengths and blind spots.
- Use free assessments for reflection, not labels.
- Ask trusted people how they experience you.
- Your leadership statement will grow with you.

Next: Your place in history.

KEEP LEARNING

VIA Character Strengths Survey

Free strengths ranking · viacharacter.org

Open Jungian Type Scales

Free type test · openpsychometrics.org

O*NET Interest Profiler

Free career interests · onetinterestprofiler.org

NLC Leader Hub

Every resource in this series, searchable in one place