

Organizational Readiness for Social Change

Who should participate in the assessment?

The assessment is designed for the leadership and staff members of an organization where there is interest in pursuing social change work. For this assessment, the board of directors and the organization's staff should complete this assessment (thus receiving two sets of scores).

How do we take this assessment?

Hand out copies of the assessment to each respondent and ask each person. Keep track of staff versus board response. Respondents should simply select the answer that fits best as there is likely no way to perfectly describe your organization. Once participants have submitted their answers, take the average of both staff and board (thus leaving you two results).

Part 1: Vision, Mission, and Theory of Change

1. Does your organization have a written mission statement?
 - a. No, our organization does not have a written mission statement.
 - b. Yes, our organization has a written mission statement, but I don't really know what it is or how it applies to our work.
 - c. Yes, our organization has a written mission statement; I know what it is but I don't think it really guides our work.
 - d. Yes, our organization has a written mission statement that guides our work; staff and board understand the mission.
2. Does your organization have a vision statement? (A vision statement is a description of the world that your organization wants to help create.)
 - a. No, we don't have a written vision statement, and we have never talked about our vision.
 - b. No, we don't have a written vision statement, but we talk about our vision. However, there doesn't seem to be any overall agreement among staff and board members about the vision.
 - c. Yes, we have a written vision statement, and I know what it is but I don't think it really guides our work.
 - d. Yes, we have a written vision statement that guides our work; staff and board understand the vision.
3. Does your organization evaluate how your activities advance the mission and/or vision?
 - a. Unless something is obviously going wrong, we assume that our activities are working.
 - b. Our program staff and their supervisors evaluate their programs. These evaluations do not reference our agency's mission or vision and are often dictated by funders' guidelines or grant proposals.
 - c. Our programs are routinely evaluated based on our agency's goals and anticipated outcomes, which stem from our mission or vision. However, we rarely discuss the results of these evaluations.
 - d. We set goals and strategies that reference our agency's mission or vision. Programs are routinely evaluated, and we discuss the results among ourselves and with others in the organization. We then make changes in the program based on our mission/vision, and on the evaluation results.

Part 2: Leadership for Change

1. The organizational structure and decision-making process within your organization can best be described in the following way:
 - a. The director and/or board of directors make most of the decisions.
 - b. The director regularly consults with staff and constituents, but there is no formal leadership structure with decision-making power beyond the director and the board.
 - c. The director consults with staff and constituents. We are working on developing a more formal power-sharing process.
 - d. Decision-making structures and accountability are clear, and power is formally shared among people at different levels of the organization.
2. How does your organization's leaders reflect the communities you serve? ("Leaders" refers to senior staff and other staff with significant decision-making authority and autonomy, as well as the board of directors.)
 - a. Our organization's leadership does not reflect the community we serve in terms of race, ethnicity, economic status, gender, age, etc. There is little interest in recruiting, developing or promoting leadership that reflects those we serve.
 - b. Our organization's leadership does not reflect the community we serve. The organization has tried to change through diversity training or other efforts, but with little success.
 - c. Our organization's leadership is not fully reflective of our community, but it is more reflective than it has been in the past. The organization is consciously working to address this issue.
 - d. Our leadership (or organization) reflects and is representative of the communities we serve. We have ongoing, well-developed procedures in place to recruit and develop leaders from the community.
3. How do clients/constituents participate in your organization?
 - a. Our clients/constituents receive services, but do not have any say in the services they receive or the goals of the organization.
 - b. We are interested in feedback and periodically ask clients/constituents for their opinions or feedback through surveys, evaluations, comment cards, or meetings. However, this process is not consistent and there is no structured way for clients/constituents to have a say in how the organization operates.
 - c. We get feedback from clients/constituents in different ways and take the feedback into account when we evaluate our agency's work. We have tried to bring constituents into leadership roles (such as board members), but we haven't done it consistently and when we have done it, the results have not gone very well.
 - d. Clients/constituents successfully participate in our organization at every level, from giving feedback on services to serving on committees, leadership groups and the board of directors.
4. Does your organization work with clients/constituents for social change?
 - a. We provide services only; the organization does not seem interested in doing social change work, such as advocacy or teaching our clients/constituents about their rights.
 - b. Our organization is interested in social change but is afraid that if we speak up it will jeopardize our ability to do our work. We do belong to coalitions that advocate to prevent funding cuts in our organizations.
 - c. Our organization has been active in several issues affecting our clients/constituents and keeps us informed about what is going on in that arena. Mainly, the executive director and a few senior leaders are involved in this effort.
 - d. Our organization has been active in social change work and its activities include and are led by constituents who have had leadership training on how to do this work. We are regularly informed and updated on progress in this area and are encouraged to participate and to include our clients/constituents in these efforts.

Scoring the Assessment

Score each section separately, as your score in each section will help you identify where to begin your efforts. For each of the following answers, give yourself the following score:

A = 0 B = 1 C = 2 D = 3

Part 1: Mission, Vision and Theory of Change: _____

Part 2: Leadership for Change: _____

Total Score: _____