



Northern Ireland
Assembly



Leadership Strengths Matrix



Seeing the Big Picture

Leadership Strengths Matrix

Definition: Understand and navigate the wider organisational and parliamentary context and align decisions and work with the Assembly Commission's Corporate Strategy.



Why it Matters

Leaders who see the big picture ensure that their own efforts - and those of their business areas and teams - are connected, coordinated and contribute meaningfully to the Assembly Commission's strategic priorities

They create alignment between day to day activity and wider organisational objectives, enabling decisions that are informed, future focused, and appropriate to the unique requirements of a parliamentary context



How it's Demonstrated

Strategic Alignment:

Aligns work with the Assembly Commission's strategic priorities

Organisational Awareness:

Understands political and organisational context

Future Planning:

Plans work and anticipates risks and opportunities for long-term success



How it relates to Communication and Trust

Seeing the Big Picture builds trust by clearly communicating strategic direction, challenges and progress, and by showing how individual roles and team contributions link to the Assembly Commission's priorities

By being transparent about the wider context and the reasons behind decisions, leaders demonstrate honesty and openness, strengthening trust and confidence across teams



Leadership Layers

Self-Leaders:

Understand the Assembly Commission's strategic priorities and contribute meaningfully to team objectives

Leaders:

Align collective efforts – across teams, projects, and areas of influence - with strategic priorities and help colleagues see their impact

Senior Leaders:

Shape strategic direction, anticipate trends and ensure long-term alignment with strategic priorities

Continuous Growth

Leadership Strengths Matrix

Definition: Create an environment of continuous growth where individuals and teams are encouraged to develop their skills, achieve objectives, and contribute to organisational excellence.



Why it Matters

Continuous Growth supports a culture of learning and improvement, where people feel safe to take appropriate risks, learn from mistakes, and grow

It promotes curiosity and adaptability, encouraging individuals and teams to develop skills and share learning

This approach builds confidence and resilience, driving innovation, engagement, and long-term success across the Assembly Commission



How it's Demonstrated

Development Focus:

Sets objectives, engages in learning, and models a growth mindset

Feedback Culture:

Promotes coaching, reflection, feedback and openness

Celebrating Progress:

Recognises achievements and marks milestones



How it relates to Communication and Trust

Continuous Growth builds trust by communicating a clear vision for development, setting expectations, and providing consistent, constructive feedback

Open dialogue and inclusive communication empowers people and teams to grow



Leadership Layers

Self-Leaders:

Set personal development goals, seek feedback and support others' growth

Leaders:

Coach and support colleagues, provide feedback and foster an environment where people feel motivated to learn

Senior Leaders:

Embed a culture of growth, align development with strategic priorities and monitor progress and impact

Empowerment

Leadership Strengths Matrix

Definition: Enhance staff autonomy and build trust by delegating responsibility, providing support, and fostering a culture of ownership.



Why it Matters

Empowerment creates a motivated, confident, resilient workforce. When people feel trusted and supported, they use initiative, make decisions, and contribute to the Assembly Commission's performance

It encourages ownership and accountability. By fostering autonomy and involving people in decisions, leaders build engagement and trust, strengthening collaboration and supporting long-term success



How it's Demonstrated

Delegation and Ownership:

Assign meaningful work and encourage responsibility

Supportive Leadership:

Provide guidance and resources to enable success

Inclusive Engagement:

Seek input and recognise contributions



How it relates to Communication and Trust

Empowerment builds trust by communicating confidence in others' capabilities, offering clarity and support, and creating a safe environment for autonomy and decision-making

This openness strengthens trust, as people feel respected, valued and encouraged to contribute fully to shared goals



Leadership Layers

Self-Leaders:

Take initiative, share knowledge, support others in decision-making and collaborate

Leaders:

Build trust, provide support and feedback and involve colleagues in decisions

Senior Leaders:

Champion a culture of autonomy and trust and create systems that enable ownership and innovation

Change Leadership

Leadership Strengths Matrix

Definition: Successfully navigate and lead through change by responding effectively to shifting priorities, challenges, and stakeholder needs.



Why it Matters

Change is a constant in the Assembly Commission's work. Leaders who approach change positively and pace it appropriately for their teams build resilience, adaptability and effective service delivery

By providing clarity, reassurance and steady guidance, they help people stay focused, confident and engaged even in uncertain times



How it's Demonstrated

Adaptability:

Adjust plans and priorities effectively

People-Focused:

Understand the impact of change on people and teams

Clear Communication:

Articulate the purpose and process of change



How it relates to Communication and Trust

Change Leadership builds trust by clearly communicating the purpose and impact of change, acknowledging challenges, and involving others in shaping the way forward

By being open to hearing different views and encouraging honest dialogue, leaders show respect for people's experiences and perspectives, strengthening trust and commitment throughout periods of change



Leadership Layers

Self-Leaders:

Embrace change positively, remain flexible and seek solutions

Leaders:

Guide colleagues through uncertainty by communicating clearly, adapting approaches, and fostering innovation

Senior Leaders:

Anticipate external shifts, align strategy and inspire confidence and resilience

Judgement

Leadership Strengths Matrix

Definition: Apply critical thinking and ethical decision-making with transparency and honesty.



Why it Matters

Sound judgement enables leaders to navigate complexity, weigh competing demands, and make decisions that reflect the Assembly Commission's values and strategic priorities

By gathering relevant information, listening to different perspectives and communicating the reasoning behind their choices, leaders build trust and confidence in their decision making, even when outcomes are difficult



How it's Demonstrated

Ethical Decision-Making:
Prioritises fairness and integrity

Evidence-Based Thinking:
Uses data and insights to guide choices

Transparent Rationale:
Communicates decisions clearly and consistently



How it relates to Communication and Trust

Judgement builds trust by making ethical, consistent decisions and explaining the rationale in a way that promotes understanding and confidence

When leaders are transparent about the factors they considered, the options they weighed and the values guiding their choices, people feel reassured that decisions are fair, thoughtful and aligned to the Assembly Commission's strategic priorities



Leadership Layers

Self-Leaders:
Make thoughtful decisions, seek guidance and act with integrity

Leaders:
Analyse complex information, balance priorities and communicate decisions transparently

Senior Leaders:
Apply strategic judgement, anticipate implications and model fairness and accountability

Accountability

Leadership Strengths Matrix

Definition: Take ownership of decisions, actions, and outcomes, ensuring alignment with the Assembly Commission's Corporate Strategy.



Why it Matters

Accountability fosters a culture of ownership and high performance

It ensures that individuals and teams understand their responsibilities, address challenges constructively, and contribute to the Assembly Commission's success with integrity

By setting clear expectations and following through on commitments, leaders build trust and confidence, creating an environment where people take responsibility and learn from experience



How it's Demonstrated

Ownership and Integrity:

Takes responsibility for actions and outcomes

Clarity and Expectations:

Defines roles and clarifies performance standards

Appropriate Oversight:

Monitors progress and addresses challenges openly



How it relates to Communication and Trust

Accountability builds trust by setting clear expectations, communicating openly about setbacks and successes, and modelling honesty and responsibility

When leaders acknowledge mistakes, share learning and follow through on commitments, people see that actions match words, strengthening trust in both the leader and the wider organisation



Leadership Layers

Self-Leaders:

Take ownership of tasks, meet commitments and learn from experience

Leaders:

Set clear expectations, hold self and colleagues accountable, address issues openly, and learn from outcomes

Senior Leaders:

Embed a culture of accountability, model integrity and drive continuous improvement

Emotional Intelligence

Leadership Strengths Matrix

Definition: Recognise, understand, and manage one's own emotions while empathising with and influencing the emotions of others.



Why it Matters

Emotional intelligence strengthens relationships, reduces conflict, and supports inclusive, high-performing teams. It helps leaders create environments where people feel respected, valued, and motivated

By managing emotions effectively, leaders build trust and understanding, enabling collaboration, resilience, and better decision-making. This fosters a positive culture where people feel heard and supported



How it's Demonstrated

Self-Awareness:

Recognises emotional triggers and areas for growth

Self-Regulation:

Manages emotional responses constructively

Interpersonal Effectiveness:

Builds trust and resolves conflict respectfully



How it relates to Communication and Trust

Emotional Intelligence builds trust through clear, respectful communication and empathy. Strengthens relationships by listening actively, responding with emotional insight, and fostering mutual understanding

When leaders recognise how their behaviour affects others and adapt their approach thoughtfully, people feel valued, heard and more confident in the relationship



Leadership Layers

Self-Leaders:

Manage emotions, show empathy and build positive relationships

Leaders:

Foster a respectful and supportive work environment and address challenges with empathy and professionalism

Senior Leaders:

Model emotional resilience, guide strategic decisions with emotional insight and cultivate trust and inclusion across the organisation

Building Effective Networks

Leadership Strengths Matrix

Definition: Create cohesive, high-performing teams and networks by fostering collaboration, trust, and a shared sense of purpose.



Why it Matters

Strong teams and internal and external networks are essential to the Assembly Commission's success

Leaders who build effective relationships create environments where individuals thrive, communicate openly, and achieve shared goals

By fostering collaboration and trust across boundaries, they enable innovation, strengthen organisational resilience, and create a culture where people feel connected and supported



How it's Demonstrated

Role Clarity and Collaboration:
Define responsibilities and encourage teamwork

Strengths-Based Leadership:
Adapt approach to leverage diverse talents

Emotionally Intelligent Leadership:
Use emotional insight to guide team dynamics and foster an open and respectful environment



How it relates to Communication and Trust

Leaders who build effective networks, enhance trust by connecting people and communicating about shared responsibilities. This creates a culture of respect and inclusion where individuals feel valued and supported

When leaders acknowledge different perspectives and follow through commitments people feel confident in both the leader and the team environment



Leadership Layers

Self-Leaders:
Build positive relationships, collaborate and contribute to team success

Leaders:
Clarify roles and responsibilities, create inclusive, collaborative teams and networks and resolve challenges constructively

Senior Leaders:
Build strategic networks, develop high performing teams and foster cross organisational collaboration