

Tool for Assessing Personal Capacity To Lead a CSAL Program

A diagnostic questionnaire

Introduction. Given its interest in promoting the propagation of self-organizing, self-evaluating CSAL Programs, the CSAL Network intends to help its Program Initiators to identify potential Lead Scientists and Managing Directors of the for-benefit companies designed to be the agroforestry-based research, testing and learning centers of these CSAL Programs.¹ For this purpose the CSAL Global Network has devised a questionnaire that potentially-interested individuals may answer in order to assess how far they may be suited for this leadership role. Their answers should then serve as a basis for interviews with the Initiators and other members of the Network. The aim is to develop a diagnostic tool and a process for interviews that can identify the (probably rare) mindsets of persons who will perform happily and well in this unique role.

Design of the questionnaire. The questionnaire is a set of statements to which the respondent chooses among: strongly disagrees, mildly disagrees, is ambivalent, mildly agrees, and strongly agrees. The answers are designed to reveal qualities of mindset, encompassing ideas and beliefs, values and attitudes, and personal interests and preferences, that in principle are important for positive outcomes. No normative judgment is implied by any answer. Different mindsets have their justifications and presumably fit the functions and circumstances of their owners. This questionnaire is not a test but instead aims to identify a particular type of leadership capacity.

The questionnaire is devised to identify six kinds of leadership quality: four that are important for developmental leadership in general, namely character, charisma, know-how, and vision, and two others that are important for the entrepreneurial function of this leadership, namely independence and creativity. The former is associated with the value of self-reliance, and the latter with a penchant for innovation despite the risks of the entailed uncertainty.

For each of these six kinds of leadership quality, three lenses through which a person views the world and her/his place in it are identified: (1) statements about how the world itself actually is; (2) statements about values (how the world should be); and (3) statements about how the person answering the questionnaire views herself/himself in relation to how the world is and/or should be. In the list of statements that compose the questionnaire, the first lens is labeled F (for fact); the second is labeled V (for value); and the third is labeled I (for the self).

For each of the six kinds of leadership quality and for each of the three lenses, there are two types of statements. Type A are statements that these leaders are expected to agree with more strongly than others. For these statements, scoring is on a scale from 1 to 5 where strongest agreement is scored 5 and strongest disagreement 1. Type B are

¹ See "[The CSAL Model for the Local Leadership of Sustainable Social Change.](#)" These for-benefit companies, called Business Development Services Companies (BDSComs), are introduced in this document.

statements that these leaders are expected to disagree with, more than others. For these statements, strongest agreement is scored 1 and strongest disagreement 5. Thus, from all the answers a total test score can be calculated and compared with average scores for the general population.

In presenting the 36 statements (6 *times* 3 *times* 2) of the questionnaire that follows, their rationale is presented through the identifiers listed above. This information may be used by the respondent to get a high score, but scoring high is not the point. The value of the questionnaire depends on giving truthful answers, and then using them to tease out information that is useful to all concerned. If it is important to avoid “gaming the test,” the questionnaire without its rationale and with the statements jumbled randomly can be used. This form is also provided below.

The Questionnaire

The 36 statements comprising the questionnaire, organized by the 6 kinds of leadership quality, by the 3 lenses of perception, and by Types A and B, are listed below.

Quality 1. Character. Soul power: moving the community by the spirit of love (genuine and passionate care) to work for the common benefit

FA *Since the dawn of Man, sharing within the community, as opposed to self interest, has been basic to survival and comfort.*

FB *Economic systems have to rely on basic human self-interest. It's the only force strong enough to motivate high performance.*

VA *The real reward of success is accomplishment, and that accomplishment is greatest if done out of genuine care for others.*

VB *Sharing is fine in principle, but when times are hard, you have to look out for yourself, because nobody else will do it.*

IA *What brightens my day is helping others whom I care for, and it seems the more I help, the more I care.*

IB *I feel that my first obligation is to myself and those depending on me. We have public programs for the less able or fortunate.*

Quality 2. Charisma. People power: being the persona in front, the focal point for action

FA *Wildly improbable things can happen when a great person is so committed to a cause that waves of others rise up and join the movement.*

FB *Social change is driven by the impersonal forces of history, not men on missions, who fool both themselves and others. Anyway, “great men” do evil as often as good.*

VA *The power to lead through passionate caring, which resides within some people, must be exercised through ability to inspire, and this ability is precious and rare.*

VB *Showmanship is only for ideologues and politicians. The real work of social change is done by those who avoid the stage and the camera’s eye.*

IA *Any person can be a heroine if life throws her an opportunity. If this happens to me, I’ll catch it and use it.*

IB *The world needs good followers as much as it does good leaders. I’m happy to let those who want the glory to be out in front making the decisions.*

Quality 3. Know-how. Idea power: knowing how the relevant systems work

FA *Sustainable progress comes from the interplay of learning better ways and investing in them, with patient perseverance.*

FB *Technicians have their own culture, and it doesn’t mix well with the culture at the top of the organization. Effective leaders stay on their own side of this divide.*

VA *To transform a social system you have to know how it works. Otherwise, you cannot rely on those who do.*

VB *The job of knowing how organizations work on the inside is for managers and administrators, not leaders.*

IA *The technician inside me constantly asks, “How does this system work?” Indeed, unless I have “know-how,” my ability to lead will lack for power.*

IB *I like to drive a good-performing car and don’t care how it works. I pay others to fix it and trust they will do it right.*

Quality 4. Vision. Change power: driving present change with views of our common future

FA *Complex tasks required to get from the present to the future are possible if people know the dynamics. If Man can get to the Moon and back, he can create a better Earth.*

FB *Visionaries, like all utopians throughout history, are dreamers who come and go without much long-term impact.*

VA *Happiness consists mainly in knowing that you are on the road to where you want to go.*

VB *There's not much that people can do about the future, since it's so uncertain. They may as well live one day at a time and deal with known problems as they arise.*

IA *If today is the first day of the rest of my life, I appreciate the fresh start, and I want to know where I'm going, and why.*

IB *Hope disappoints. Forecasts are wrong. We have this need to live well before we die. And death alone is certain among future events. So why plan?*

Quality 5. Independence. The power of self-reliance: making our own work and making it pay

FA *Confidence in your ability to solve a problem on your own is crucial. Once you've done it, you can build on that, and then assistance from others is no threat.*

FB *Breakthroughs of a problem are rare. Success comes from understanding all that others have done before you, and then adding a bit of improvement.*

VA *Freedom comes from self-reliance, which comes from making your own bed and lying in it. In other words, make your own work, and make it pay.*

VB *Those who have should provide for those who have not. Given the injustice in the world, the poor have every right to expect aid from the rich until things are more equal.*

IA *I value freedom more than security—the kind of freedom that comes from being able to take care of myself and the whole community that I'm part of.*

IB *With so many people in the world trying humanely to help the poor, I think that it is blessed to receive help and be thankful for it, just as it is blessed to give.*

Quality 6. Creativity. Innovation power: taking risks to explore our new frontiers

FA *Societies, like economies, can only be maintained through sustained innovation.*

FB *Coming up with something "new," albeit marginally better, undermines the value of what came before. In this sense much "innovation" is wasteful.*

VA *Challenging the unknown with something new, and proving its value for those who created it and took the risk of loss, are great human achievements.*

VB *It's hard enough to make things run right through steady repetition. The last thing we need is constant tinkering. If the present mousetrap works, don't scrap it.*

IA *Every day I wake up wondering what I learned yesterday that should make me re-assess my future course. Yesterday's learning is my investment in change today.*

IB *Every day I wake up wondering how I can increase my comfort and security by increasing the appreciation of others for what I do well.*

The Questionnaire in a Blind Format

Instructions

Please score each of these 36 statements from 1 to 5, where:

1 means strongly disagree

2 means mildly disagree

3 means ambivalent

4 means mildly agree

5 means strongly agree

1. Technicians have their own culture, and it doesn't mix well with the culture at the top of the organization. Effective leaders stay on their own side of this divide.
2. Showmanship is only for ideologues and politicians. The real work of social change is done by those who avoid the stage and the camera's eye.
3. What brightens my day is helping others whom I care for, and it seems the more I help, the more I care.
4. I feel that my first obligation is to myself and those depending on me. We have public programs for the less able or fortunate.
5. Every day I wake up wondering how I can increase my comfort and security by increasing the appreciation of others for what I do well.
6. Coming up with something "new," albeit marginally better, undermines the value of what came before. In this sense much "innovation" is wasteful.
7. To transform a social system, you have to know how it works. Otherwise, you cannot rely on those who do.
8. Societies, like economies, can only be well maintained through sustained innovation.
9. Challenging the unknown with something new, and proving its value for those who created it and took the risk of loss, are great human achievements.

10. The technician inside me constantly asks, “How does this system work?” Indeed, unless I have “know-how,” my ability to lead will lack for power.
11. The power to lead through passionate caring, which resides within some people, must be exercised through ability to inspire, and this ability is precious and rare.
12. I like to drive a good-performing car and don’t care how it works. I pay others to fix it and trust they will do it right.
13. Any person can be a heroine if life throws her an opportunity. If this happens to me, I’ll catch it and use it.
14. Complex tasks required to get from the present to the future are possible if people know the dynamics. If Man can get to the Moon and back, he can create a better Earth.
15. The real reward of success is accomplishment, and that accomplishment is greatest if done out of genuine care for others.
16. Visionaries, like all utopians throughout history, are dreamers who come and go without much long-term impact.
17. Happiness consists mainly in knowing that you are on the road to where you want to go.
18. Economic systems have to rely on basic human self-interest. It’s the only force strong enough to motivate high performance.
19. Sharing is fine in principle, but when times are hard, you have to look out for yourself, because nobody else will do it.
20. The job of knowing how organizations work on the inside is for managers and administrators, not leaders.
21. There’s not much that people can do about the future, since it’s so uncertain. They may as well live one day at a time and deal with known problems as they arise.
22. Sustainable progress comes from the interplay of learning better ways and investing in them, with patient perseverance.
23. Wildly improbable things can happen when a great person is so committed to a cause that waves of others rise up and join the movement.
24. Breakthroughs of a problem are rare. Success comes from understanding all that others have done before you, and then adding a bit of improvement.

25. Social change is driven by the impersonal forces of history, not men on missions, who fool both themselves and others. Anyway, “great men” do evil as often as good.
26. Those who have should provide for those who have not. Given the injustice in the world, the poor have every right to expect aid from the rich until things are more equal.
27. I value freedom more than security—the kind of freedom that comes from being able to take care of myself and the whole community that I’m part of.
28. Confidence in your ability to solve a problem on your own is crucial. Once you’ve done it, you can build on that, and then assistance from others is no threat.
29. With so many people in the world trying humanely to help the poor, I think that it is blessed to receive help and be thankful for it, just as it is blessed to give.
30. If today is the first day of the rest of my life, I appreciate the fresh start, and I want to know where I’m going, and why.
31. It’s hard enough to make things run right through steady repetition. The last thing we need is constant tinkering. If the present mousetrap works, don’t scrap it.
32. Every day I wake up wondering what I learned yesterday that should make me re-assess my future course. Yesterday’s learning is my investment in change today.
33. Freedom comes from independence, which comes from making your own bed and lying in it. In other words, make your own work, and make it pay.
34. The world needs good followers as much as it does good leaders. I’m happy to let those who want the glory to be out in front making the decisions.
35. Since the dawn of Man, sharing within the community, as opposed to self interest, has been basic to survival and comfort.
36. Hope disappoints. Forecasts are wrong. We have this problem of living well before we die. And death alone is certain among future events. So why plan?