

Network Development Self-Assessment

We've created a brief assessment to help you identify which Network Know-How Guides will be the best fit for your network at this time.

Keep in Mind

Remember that where your network is in its evolution will influence scores for each network design dimension. For example, formal governance rules are generally less of a concern in the early formation of a network. As you get started, think about the following:

Adapting is fundamental to network vitality

Networks are dynamic entities with systems and infrastructure that you need to revisit periodically. Even well-established networks will score lower on some design dimensions sometimes. When this happens, it might be time to review network priorities or decision-making processes.

Tap into collective intelligence

The network's strength lies in its members. Consider asking network members to take the self-assessment to help you see similarities and differences in responses and make adjustments as necessary.

Network Development Self-Assessment

Instructions

For each of the following seven network design dimensions, circle the number on the 7-point scale that best describes where your network is now. Briefly describe your reason for this score.

Enter your answers in the Network Development Self-Assessment table at the end of the assessment on page 18.

Use Reviewing Your Responses for guidance on what your scores mean. Your results indicate which topics and Guides are most relevant to your network at this time.

You might want to retake this Network Development Self-Assessment in a year to monitor changes in your responses from one year to the next.

1 Network Purpose

The network's reasons for being: what the network stands for, what problems members need to address together and what activities members will undertake.

1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5 — 6 — 7

EMERGENT

The network founder or core members may have a proposed goal or see evidence of interest among potential members (e.g., coming out of a gathering), but they are still clarifying the network's purpose.

WELL-DEFINED AND BROADLY SHARED

The network's purpose is clear, and most members understand it.

Reason for Score:

2 Network Value Propositions

The benefit members seek from taking part in a network.

1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5 — 6 — 7

Value propositions are unclear to members or unknown to network organizers.

Value propositions are known and codified.

Reason for Score:

3 Network Leadership

Rules for guiding the direction and activities of the network.

1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5 — 6 — 7

There are no explicitly stated leadership roles in the network other than the founder. This may be because the network is at an early stage of development or is an emerging network whose purpose is still being defined.

There are many opportunities to lead in the network. Members are stepping up to manage different parts of the work.

Reason for Score:

4 Network Governance

Who decides what the network will do and how they decide to do it.

1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5 — 6 — 7

A single “node” or network hub makes most decisions.

Members are actively helping to make decisions about network strategies and plans.

Reason for Score:

5 Network Health

Internal conditions that help the network thrive (e.g., conditions related to network coordination and communications).

1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5 — 6 — 7

There is little or no tracking of basic network health conditions.

Members systematically track network health conditions and use the results to inform planning.

Reason for Score:

6 Network Connectivity

The number and quality of ties between members.

1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5 — 6 — 7

The number and quality of ties or relationships between members are unknown.

The number and quality of ties between members are being mapped regularly over time, and the results are being used to inform network-building efforts

Reason for Score:

7 Network Sustainability

How the network secures and maintains the resources it needs to accomplish its goals.

1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5 — 6 — 7

There is no plan for how members will secure necessary network resources.

Members have a clear plan for securing necessary resources and are implementing the plan.

Reason for Score:

NETWORK DESIGN DIMENSIONS	SCORE
NETWORK PURPOSE	
NETWORK VALUE PROPOSITIONS	
NETWORK LEADERSHIP	
NETWORK GOVERNANCE	
NETWORK HEALTH	
NETWORK CONNECTIVITY	
NETWORK SUSTAINABILITY	

Reviewing Your Responses

Enter your scores from the self-assessment into the table above. For each network design dimension, a score of 1–3 means that this is an area of potential evolution for your network. It might be time to consider more intentional network development in this dimension, depending on your network’s priorities and its stage of development.

A score of 4–5 means that a particular network design dimension could improve but may not be a priority over other dimensions with lower scores. You can still strengthen your network in these dimensions using tips from the Guides.

A score of 6 or 7 means that your network is functioning at a high level in these dimensions. In the next section, you’ll see which Guides will help you explore different network design dimensions.