SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Systems Thinking Perspective Project:
Behaviors that Drive Innovation in Information Delivery
www.sla.org/division/dbio/Systems/

INTRODUCTION

This personal assessment tool requires you to reflect honestly on your attitude toward your work and your interactions with others in your organization.

We believe it is most beneficial if you place yourself in the context of your current work and seek to understand both your strengths and potential areas for growth. We realize that there are real barriers in your work situation that may prevent you from taking part in certain activities or being as proactive as you would like to be in terms of interacting with others in the organization. As you are going through this assessment, you will want to think carefully about those barriers and how it might be possible to break through them.

There are no correct or incorrect answers to the questions posed in the assessment. Consider this as 'food for thought'—whether your role is that of manager, a member of a team or an individual contributor. Each one of us has the capacity to influence others in our work no matter what our role is at a given time.
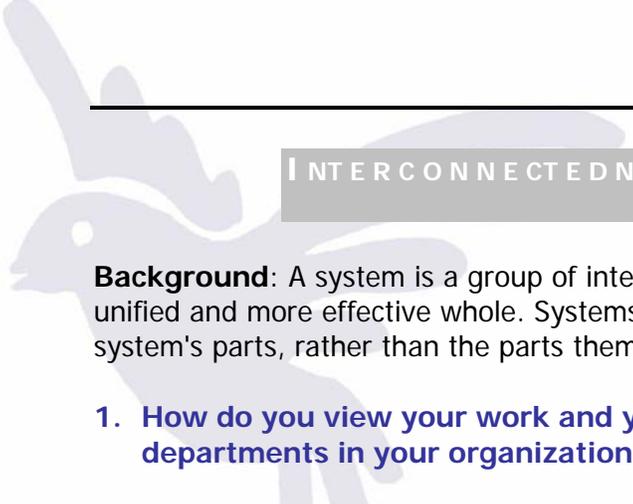
Background: A system is a group of interacting and interdependent components that form a unified and more effective whole. Systems thinking emphasizes the relationships among a system's parts, rather than the parts themselves.

1. How do you view your work and your priorities in relation to those of other departments in your organization?

a. I see my role as integral to the workings of the entire organization, not just a service for clients that approach me.

☐ Strongly agree   ☐ Somewhat agree   ☐ Not sure   ☐ Somewhat disagree   ☐ Strongly disagree

b. I consider time spent outside the information center conversing with current and potential customers about their information needs and experiences time well spent.

☐ Strongly agree   ☐ Somewhat agree   ☐ Not sure   ☐ Somewhat disagree   ☐ Strongly disagree

c. I actively participate in planning meetings for new initiatives in my organization (i.e., I attend sessions to brainstorm and discuss the ways information and knowledge services can be integrated into project goals and contribute to solutions and outcomes).

☐ Strongly agree   ☐ Somewhat agree   ☐ Not sure   ☐ Somewhat disagree   ☐ Strongly disagree

d. I actively participate in project start-up activities in my organization (i.e., I offer information and internal referrals to support idea generation and competitive awareness).

☐ Strongly agree   ☐ Somewhat agree   ☐ Not sure   ☐ Somewhat disagree   ☐ Strongly disagree

e. When considering strategic planning, or personal goal setting in the context of strategic planning, I look beyond the information center to see the impact of my work on the entire organization.

☐ Strongly agree   ☐ Somewhat agree   ☐ Not sure   ☐ Somewhat disagree   ☐ Strongly disagree

Background: Partnership involves respecting those with whom we work and encouraging them to believe that they can contribute to solutions. Tapping the insights and knowledge of all persons in the community facilitates opportunities to leverage experience, resources and expertise to produce the best organizational decisions and results.

2. Do you increase your leverage and effectiveness through partnering with other departments and individuals?

a. I build partnerships and resource connections outside of the information center. (i.e., I find opportunities for influence and reward are revealed when I know more about what is going on).

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Somewhat agree ☐ Not sure ☐ Somewhat disagree ☐ Strongly disagree

b. I regularly participate in open dialogues with information center management to check alignment with organizational priorities and to brainstorm ideas for increasing the effectiveness of the information center. (i.e., I employ brainstorming tools to look for opportunities that yield the best return).

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Somewhat agree ☐ Not sure ☐ Somewhat disagree ☐ Strongly disagree

c. I have identified key stakeholders within the organization and communicate with them frequently to assess how information center products and services support creative thinking and innovation.

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Somewhat agree ☐ Not sure ☐ Somewhat disagree ☐ Strongly disagree

d. I am confident I can articulate the challenges facing the information center and solicit potential solutions from management.

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Somewhat agree ☐ Not sure ☐ Somewhat disagree ☐ Strongly disagree

e. I periodically ask myself if I make my assumptions and opinions explicit when speaking with staff about performance objectives.

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Somewhat agree ☐ Not sure ☐ Somewhat disagree ☐ Strongly disagree

f. I honestly believe I make my assumptions and opinions explicit when speaking with clients about projects we are undertaking.

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Somewhat agree ☐ Not sure ☐ Somewhat disagree ☐ Strongly disagree

PERSONAL MASTERY

Background: Personal mastery refers to individual learning. It involves defining a clear vision of what one wishes to achieve and then setting a goal to accomplish that.

3. How do you encourage learning and knowledge sharing behaviors in your environment?

a. I spend time with experts in other departments (i.e. physicians, engineers, account representatives) in order to observe how they use information resources   in their work.

☐ Strongly agree   ☐ Somewhat agree   ☐ Not sure   ☐ Somewhat disagree   ☐ Strongly disagree

b. I spend time with experts in other departments to share knowledge with them as I learn more about their work.

☐ Strongly agree   ☐ Somewhat agree   ☐ Not sure   ☐ Somewhat disagree   ☐ Strongly disagree

c. I seek opinions from staff in a variety of departments to obtain a broad range of potential solutions to problems.

☐ Strongly agree   ☐ Somewhat agree   ☐ Not sure   ☐ Somewhat disagree   ☐ Strongly disagree

d. I routinely share what I learn from conferences and colleagues outside the organization with my staff and other colleagues and encourage them to share their learnings with others.

☐ Strongly agree   ☐ Somewhat agree   ☐ Not sure   ☐ Somewhat disagree   ☐ Strongly disagree

Background: Inquiry, conversation, listening and understanding in an atmosphere of trust and respect can lead to breakthrough ideas and creative energy. Dialogue and discussion don't just happen. They generally need to be orchestrated through conscious efforts to build an opportunity and personally prepare for this level of exchange.

4. Do discussions with colleagues invite alternative ways of viewing problems and suggestions for new ways of working?

a. I view admissions of mistakes as healthy rather than as a sign of weakness or failure on the part of an individual.

☐ Strongly agree   ☐ Somewhat agree   ☐ Not sure   ☐ Somewhat disagree   ☐ Strongly disagree

b. When there is a process failure, I seek to identify and understand the root causes of the problem, and then work on solutions.

☐ Strongly agree   ☐ Somewhat agree   ☐ Not sure   ☐ Somewhat disagree   ☐ Strongly disagree

c. I set the stage to allow solutions to problems to be developed and implemented thoughtfully and in a non-threatening environment.

☐ Strongly agree   ☐ Somewhat agree   ☐ Not sure   ☐ Somewhat disagree   ☐ Strongly disagree

d. I carefully review difficult conversations in order to understand participants' mental models, and thus improve my part in subsequent conversations.

☐ Strongly agree   ☐ Somewhat agree   ☐ Not sure   ☐ Somewhat disagree   ☐ Strongly disagree

Notes for personal follow up: