



Leadership Network Assessment

Purpose:

- To assess the strength of your personal support group or network. It helps you determine the current levels and required levels of support within your network or sphere of influence. This information can then be included in the DISRUPT IT!® Personal and Professional Plan (see the “PLAN IT!” section of the Toolkit).

Timing:

- *This is not meant to be a one-time-only exercise, however; the **Leadership Network Assessment Table** should be reviewed and updated regularly to assess the current levels of support of key members of your network and to identify any new members that may need to be added to your network (your team of advisors).*

Steps:

1. Develop a comprehensive list of people who are (or should be) in your network. Who will be impacted by the role/ project/ initiative that you are leading (i.e. will be the “customer”, “stakeholder”, “decision maker”)? Who has influence over your success or failure (e.g. has formal or informal authority in your current role/ project/ initiative/ career)? Do you know who participates in your performance review discussions? Do you know who is on the team for succession planning? What about those who are your peers? Those who have influence within your team? The senior leaders that can support you? Those people you can learn from or are potential mentors? Don’t forget to add those who are in your personal network of friends, societies that you participate in, etc. Use the following table to expand the breadth of your network:

	OPERATIONAL	PERSONAL	STRATEGIC
PURPOSE	Getting work done effectively	Enhancing personal and professional development	Identifying future priorities and challenges
AUDIENCE & ORIENTATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internally focused • Oriented towards current demands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Externally focused • Oriented towards current and future interests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contacts are external and internal • Oriented towards the future
NETWORK ATTRIBUTES & KEY BEHAVIORS	Depth: Building strong working relationships	Breadth: Reaching out to contacts who can make referrals	Leverage: Creating inside-out links



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List all of these people in the Leadership Network Assessment Table (Refer to page 4 for the chart -- fill in columns titled "Name", "Role & Function", "Network Type").

2. Identify the people on your list that are "key" (i.e. who controls critical resources, who can block your career or progress by direct or indirect means, who must approve certain aspects of the plans or strategies that you propose, who shapes the thinking of other critical constituents, or who "owns" a key area impacted by your projects/ role/ initiatives). To avoid becoming bogged down in this analysis, it is wise to initially limit the list of **key** network members to no more than 12 - 15 individuals or groups. If the list is considerably longer, it probably contains individuals/groups who are important but not essential to your role/ career/ project/ initiative. **Circle network members who are "key"**.
3. Determine where each person is currently with regard to their relationship with you. In reviewing each individual, examine both objective evidence of where the individual is (e.g., "During meetings, Bill consistently disagrees with my ideas, and is unwilling to provide resources to my team.") as well as subjective opinion (e.g. "Betty is likely to be strongly supportive because of her need and value for my skills"). Rate each person, determine whether they are "against," "neutral," or "supportive." **Indicate where each key person is with an "X"**.
4. Determine where each person needs to be in order to be most effective for your success in your career/ role. In addition, when determining where each person needs to be in terms of support, consider the timing of WHEN that person needs to be at the required level of support. If there are urgent needs, take these into account when developing your **DISRUPT IT!® Personal and Professional plan** so that these people are addressed early. Remember, some people need only be shifted from "strongly against" to "neutral" (meaning they will no longer be an active blocker), while others may only need to be "moderately supportive." **Indicate where each key person needs to be with an "O"**.
5. Take a moment to look for logical relationships between and among the people on your list, in terms of who might assist you in gaining the support of others. For example, if a key person who is "strongly supportive" is also a "thought leader" for others on your list, it might be useful to enlist his/her support in shaping the thinking of other less supportive people. **Draw lines to connect who influences whom.**



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6. Copy all of the information under “name” and “role and function” from the **Leadership Network Assessment** table into the **DISRUPT IT!® Personal and Professional plan** (under “name,” and role and function”).
7. Regularly review the **Leadership Network Assessment** to monitor the level of support for your role/ project/ initiative/ career. Update both the **Leadership Network Assessment** and **DISRUPT IT!® Personal and Professional plan** as necessary. Also periodically review the list to ensure all potential network members have been identified. If a new network member is identified, return to step 2 and repeat the process.

Tips:

- This tool can sometimes be seen and used as a “grading chart” for individuals that rates people as “good” or “bad.” This is potentially a very destructive way to view a Leadership Network Assessment. It is not about being “good” or “bad,” but rather about how supportive key individuals are to role/ career/ initiative/ role. Someone may be strongly against your initiative/ role/ project for what that person feels are very good reasons (just as each of us is either “for” or “against” or “neutral” about proposals to improve government!).
- It is important to validate this assessment of the relationship. At a minimum, check your perceptions by seeking the input from those who you trust. In some cases, it may even be appropriate to talk with person themselves to validate the assessment of the relationship.
- Keep the information you develop in the **Leadership Network Assessment** confidential. Be aware that distribution or sharing of this information would have unintended consequences.



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Leadership Network Assessment Table

Name	Role & Function	Network Type (Operational, Personal, Strategic)	Strongly Against	Moderately Against	Neutral	Moderately Supportive	Strongly Supportive

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DISRUPT IT!® Personal and Professional Network Plan

Legend
X – Current Level
O – Required Level



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Leadership Network Assessment Example

Name	Role & Function	Network Type (Operational, Personal, Strategic)	Strongly Against	Moderately Against	Neutral	Moderately Supportive	Strongly Supportive
Jane Samuel	Field Operations Lead/ I.T. Operations	Operational – Peer	X		O		
Lacy Duncan	I.T. Operations CIO/ I.T.	Operational – Manager			X		O
Kerry McGill	Team 1 Lead/ Service Operations	Operational – Team Member				X	
Manuel Jackson	Team 2 Lead/ Service Operations	Operational – Team Member			X	O	
Albert Einstein	Marketing CIO/ I.T.	Operational – Managers' Peer			X		O
Kendra Stewart	Sales CIO/ I.T.	Strategic – Managers' Peer					X
Fred Knock	Enterprise CIO/ I.T.	Operational – Managers' Boss				X	
Michael Straphang	Plant Manager/ Operations	Operational – Business Partner		X		O	
Paul Jones	Company A CIO	Strategic – Former Boss (External)					X
Debbie Warrick	Company B CFO	Strategic – Mentor (External)					X
Jim Jones	Company C Service Ops. Team Lead	Personal – Mentor					X



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References

She Disrupts IT! You Can Too! Four Powerful Strategies of Successful I.T. Women by Dr. Annette Gibbs-Skervin



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An I.T. professional for more than thirty years, Dr. Annette Gibbs-Skervin is an accomplished I.T. executive, having served in progressively more responsible senior leadership roles at Johnson & Johnson, Procter & Gamble, and Information Services Group (ISG). Dr. Gibbs-Skervin is a certified Professional Coach and a member of the prestigious International Coach Federation (ICF). She is founding partner of Disrupting IT LLC, an I.T. leadership development company.

Dr. Gibbs-Skervin holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Computer Science, an MBA in Finance, and a PhD in Applied Management and Decision Sciences with a focus on overcoming leadership challenges faced by female I.T. leaders.

As a woman in I.T. executive management, Dr. Gibbs-Skervin understands the challenges inherent in climbing the I.T. leadership ladder. She is particularly sensitive to and interested in the development and success of women underrepresented at the highest levels of I.T. leadership.



She is the author of the book **“She DISRUPTS IT! You Can Too! Four Powerful Strategies of Successful I.T. Women”** that is available on Amazon.com.

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