



# OPERATIONAL LOCAL GOVERNMENT LEADER PROFILE

November 2014

## BACKGROUND

The success of communities in today's complex world requires professionals who understand and excel in leadership. To guide the development of current and future local government leadership, the Society of Local Government Managers has developed three Leadership Profiles:

- **Strategic Leader** - Chief Administrative Officer, General Manager or Senior Director responsible for overall operations
- **Operational Leader** – Department Director or Manager or of a specific function
- **Tactical Leader** – Supervisor or Coordinator for front line delivery of services

This Leader Profile is for those individuals in, or aspiring to, the role of Operational Leader (Manager). It may be used for:

- Effective Supervision - agreeing on leadership expectations that are most relevant to the employee's role in the organization.
- Self-Assessment - considering leadership strengths and weaknesses in view of strategic organizational needs.
- Personal Learning - developing a personal leadership learning plan guided by current and future leadership expectations.
- Succession Planning - articulating the expectations for future leadership opportunities to prepare individuals for career advancement.
- Performance Management - providing meaningful performance feedback based on mutually agreed upon success indicators and expectations.
- Effective Recruitment - defining competencies to select ideal candidates with leadership potential.
- Meaningful Recognition - celebrating success and recognizing others to promote service excellence.

Operational Leader Self-Assessment involves two steps:

1. **Reviewing expectations** - competencies and expectations for the leadership role
2. **Assessing competence** - current proficiency for the leadership role

The purpose and process for each step is described along with an example using the attached Leader Assessment Worksheet. Once completed, the leadership assessment can be followed up with a personal leadership learning plan to enhance individual leadership capacity.

## ASSESSMENT

### **STEP 1 - Reviewing expectations** - competencies and expectations for the leadership role

1. Review the leadership competencies of an Operational Leader.
2. Review the expectations (knowledge, skills, behaviours and abilities) associated with the competence level for your leadership role.

### **STEP 2 - Assessing competence** - current proficiency for the leadership role

1. Reflect on your performance for each competency. Consider recent experiences, your last performance evaluation and feedback you may have received from peers or members of your team.
2. Consider your performance for each of the Operational Leader competencies:
  - a. Area for Development - strengths that should be maximized for current performance or future leadership potential.
  - b. Area for Improvement - weaknesses to work on to achieve the competence level required of the position.
3. Specify details of your assessment in terms of skills, abilities, knowledge and behaviours which are associated with the expectations for each competency. Be specific. It is okay to state both improvement and development areas for a competency.

OPTIONAL - Solicit the views of your mentor, peers or members of your team to further validate and/or enrich your self-assessment. You may wish to request input from others by providing them with a copy of your completed assessment or provide them a copy with column two and three blank. Always discuss the comments from others to ensure your complete understanding of their assessment.

# OPERATIONAL LEADER ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET

| COMPETENCIES/ Expectations   | ASSESSMENT CRITERIA   | ASSESSMENT - Develop or Improve |
|--|---|---------------------------------|
| <p><b>1. <u>COMMUNICATES CLEARLY</u></b></p> <p><b>Activities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adapts approach to the situation</li> <li>• Checks for understanding of message</li> <li>• Uses a variety of tools</li> <li>• Seeks feedback form others</li> </ul> <p><b>Expectations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Well informed staff</li> <li>• No surprises for others</li> <li>• Mutual understanding exists</li> <li>• Quality written reports</li> <li>• Prepares for clear presentation of ideas</li> <li>• Conveyance of ideas in all directions</li> </ul>                                  | <p><b>Assessment Considerations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong active listening skills</li> <li>• Seeks to understand then be understood</li> <li>• Ensures direction is clearly understood</li> <li>• Maintains and encourages open 2 way dialogue</li> <li>• Ensures documentation of direction to refer back to</li> <li>• Ability to adapt to the situation and audience</li> <li>• Public speaking and presentation skills</li> <li>• Maintains Consistent message</li> <li>• Keeps Strategic Leaders advised</li> <li>• Creates intentional opportunities for communication</li> <li>• Policy framework understanding</li> <li>• More focus related towards staff than public</li> <li>• Multiple channels (media &amp; social media)</li> </ul> |                                 |
| <p><b>2. <u>COACHES OTHERS</u></b></p> <p><b>Activities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Re-enforces positive attributes</li> <li>• Conducts regular performance reviews</li> <li>• Helps others' personal development</li> <li>• Deals with issues in a timely manner</li> </ul> <p><b>Expectations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular written performance reviews</li> <li>• Sets realistic work expectations</li> <li>• Feedback respected by subordinates</li> <li>• Regular feedback/debriefing sessions</li> <li>• Learning plans in place</li> <li>• Personal learning practices</li> </ul> | <p><b>Assessment Considerations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides Mentorship</li> <li>• Ensures Performance review in place</li> <li>• Regular one on ones' with direct reports</li> <li>• Establish development goals for all staff members</li> <li>• Seizes upon teachable moments</li> <li>• Approachable, available to staff</li> <li>• Models desired behavior, leads by example</li> <li>• Foster positive culture</li> <li>• Sense of "customer service" – service excellence</li> <li>• Build rapport with staff</li> <li>• Environment to risk / fail (expect it)</li> <li>• Deal with issues in a timely manner</li> <li>• Provide resources to professional development</li> </ul>  |                                 |

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| <p><b>3. <u>BUILDS EFFECTIVE TEAMS</u></b></p> <p><b>Activities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourages sharing of ideas</li> <li>• Establishes team norms &amp; values</li> <li>• Facilitates group decision making</li> <li>• Encourages team development efforts</li> </ul> <p><b>Expectations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Team work recognition</li> <li>• Team pride and loyalty</li> <li>• Shared team roles by all members</li> <li>• Clear member behaviour expectations</li> <li>• Regard for team by others</li> <li>• Regular group development</li> </ul>     | <p><b>Assessment Considerations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fosters trust – confidence</li> <li>• Respect diversity of opinions</li> <li>• Supportive of team members</li> <li>• Communicate goals</li> <li>• Establish methods for garnering team input</li> <li>• Recognize strengths &amp; weaknesses</li> <li>• Share roles</li> <li>• Encourage others to lead</li> <li>• Encourage equal engagement</li> <li>• Find ways to “draw out” the quiet participant</li> <li>• Inter-department (one organization) team building</li> <li>• Organize personalities to promote good discussion</li> </ul>  |                                 |
| <p><b>4. <u>INSPIRES/MOTIVATES OTHERS</u></b></p> <p><b>Activities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Articulates clear objectives</li> <li>• Expresses commitment with optimism</li> <li>• Encourages employee buy-in</li> <li>• Recognizes work of others</li> </ul> <p><b>Expectations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive workplace culture</li> <li>• Climate for creativity &amp; innovation</li> <li>• Good work gets done - results</li> <li>• Celebration of success</li> <li>• Empowered &amp; self-motivated employees</li> <li>• People help each other</li> </ul> | <p><b>Assessment Considerations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Celebrate success</li> <li>• Provides recognition for success</li> <li>• Encourage and value contributions</li> <li>• Willing to allow and take Risk</li> <li>• Give staff the tools they need to meet expectations</li> <li>• Being in the trenches to provide motivation</li> <li>• Challenging skills / jobs</li> <li>• Encourage ownership</li> <li>• Values employees</li> <li>• Don't steal the spotlight</li> <li>• Employees recognize each others work</li> <li>• Encourage employee participation</li> <li>• Redirection when on negative path</li> <li>• Lead with passion</li> <li>• Lead by example</li> <li>• Express commitment with optimism &amp; enthusiasm</li> <li>• Climate for open dialogue (safe environment)</li> </ul> |                                 |

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| <p><b>5. <u>DELEGATES RESPONSIBILITY</u></b></p> <p><b>Activities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarifies roles &amp; responsibilities</li> <li>• Provides authority &amp; resources for execution</li> <li>• Monitors and recognizes progress</li> <li>• Avoids micro-managing</li> </ul> <p><b>Expectations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Empowered &amp; motivated employees</li> <li>• Tolerance for mistakes</li> <li>• Clear expectations for outcomes</li> <li>• Shared accountability for risk</li> <li>• Adequate resources for task</li> <li>• Hands off approach</li> </ul>                              | <p><b>Assessment Consideration</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop the two way street</li> <li>• Establishes Clear limits to delegation</li> <li>• Holds people personally accountable</li> <li>• Timely updates to inform upwards</li> <li>• Sounding board – feedback loop</li> <li>• Encourage ownership</li> <li>• Identify and utilize strengths appropriately</li> <li>• Support to use mistakes as learning opportunities</li> </ul>   |                                 |
| <p><b>6. <u>EMPLOYS SYSTEMS THINKING</u></b></p> <p><b>Activities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solves problems effectively</li> <li>• Understands role in organization</li> <li>• Seeks to improve processes &amp; systems</li> <li>• Thinks about the big picture</li> </ul> <p><b>Expectations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear explanation of situations</li> <li>• Process improvement efforts</li> <li>• Clear rationale for recommendations</li> <li>• Interdepartmental linkages &amp; cooperation</li> <li>• People understand strategic context</li> <li>• Logical problem solving approach</li> </ul> | <p><b>Assessment Consideration</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create method how for vetting ideas</li> <li>• Understanding the interconnectedness of decisions</li> <li>• Ability to promote other departments</li> <li>• Aware of cause/effect relationship</li> <li>• Identifies patterns (strengths, weaknesses)</li> <li>• Facilitates discussion outside group</li> <li>• Ability to effectively explain</li> <li>• Leads Environmental Scanning analysis</li> <li>• Think about the big picture</li> <li>• Communicates the vision to staff</li> <li>• Understanding of processes and systems</li> </ul> |                                 |

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| <p><b>7. <u>SETS CLEAR OBJECTIVES</u></b></p> <p><b>Activities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Defines clear expectations</li> <li>• Clarifies roles and responsibilities</li> <li>• Involves others in goal setting</li> <li>• Monitors progress &amp; feedback</li> </ul> <p><b>Expectations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff know &amp; understand objectives</li> <li>• Successful in achieving results</li> <li>• Realistic work programs &amp; action plans</li> <li>• Shared commitment to goals and objectives</li> <li>• Alignment of objectives with corporate aims</li> </ul> | <p><b>Assessment Consideration</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tie objectives back to corporate vision</li> <li>• Documents clear objectives</li> <li>• Internal and external communication support</li> <li>• Internal stakeholders involved</li> <li>• Encourage external input and feedback</li> </ul>   |                                 |
| <p><b>8. <u>MANAGES PROJECTS</u></b></p> <p><b>Activities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitates development of action plans</li> <li>• Adjusts plans to changing conditions</li> <li>• Assigns resources efficiently</li> <li>• Handles multiple projects effectively</li> </ul> <p><b>Expectations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On time delivery</li> <li>• On budget</li> <li>• Documented roles and responsibilities</li> <li>• Goal alignment among project members</li> <li>• Monitor system in place</li> <li>• Top/down communication on progress</li> </ul>                  | <p><b>Assessment Considerations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to deal with changes</li> <li>• Timely delivery</li> <li>• Recording and reporting on a project</li> <li>• Coordination</li> <li>• Two way communication</li> <li>• Emphasis on safety</li> <li>• Monitoring system in place</li> <li>• Project management skills</li> <li>• Positive outcome (quality product)</li> <li>• Coordination and project team</li> <li>• Reporting on progress and challenges</li> </ul> |                                 |

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| <p><b>9. <u>PROMOTES COOPERATION</u></b></p> <p><b>Activities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aligns activities with corporate vision</li> <li>• Helps other departments achieve goals</li> <li>• Facilitates internal communication</li> <li>• Shares resources among functions</li> </ul> <p><b>Expectations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good interdepartmental communication</li> <li>• Cooperation track record</li> <li>• Constraints recognized and addressed</li> <li>• Diversity acknowledgment</li> <li>• Effective resource sharing</li> <li>• Respectful workplace</li> </ul>          | <p><b>Assessment Consideration</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cooperation track record and shared results</li> <li>• “Community first” concept</li> <li>• Understands roles of others in team and organization</li> <li>• Understands corporate vision and how to communicate that vision</li> <li>• Commitment to overall organizational success</li> </ul> |                                 |
| <p><b>10. <u>TRANSLATES PLANS TO ACTION</u></b></p> <p><b>Activities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develops realistic timelines</li> <li>• Adjusts activities to changing situations</li> <li>• Coordinates resources effectively</li> <li>• Engages others in action planning</li> </ul> <p><b>Expectations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Documented action plans</li> <li>• Realistic expectations</li> <li>• Regular monitoring of implementation</li> <li>• Consistent reporting of progress</li> <li>• Milestone &amp; result celebration</li> <li>• Accurate resource estimation</li> </ul> | <p><b>Assessment Consideration</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Efficient communication</li> <li>• Contingency planning</li> <li>• Safety</li> <li>• Dynamic steering</li> <li>• Hands on when necessary</li> <li>• Establish clear goals</li> <li>• Provide realistic resources</li> </ul>  |                                 |

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| <p><b>11. <u>NEGOTIATES AGREEMENTS</u></b></p> <p><b>Activities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requires role clarity from both parties</li> <li>• Understands own position and why</li> <li>• Demonstrates respect for others</li> <li>• Seeks win/win outcomes</li> </ul> <p><b>Expectations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mutual respect among parties</li> <li>• Defined process in place</li> <li>• Open and transparent idea exchange</li> <li>• Positive post-negotiation relationship</li> <li>• Interest-based approach is used</li> </ul> | <p><b>Assessment Considerations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognize boundaries/limitations</li> <li>• Strategic positioning for future goals</li> <li>• Fosters equal share partnership</li> <li>• Establishes role clarity</li> <li>• Determine clear terms</li> <li>• Get best deal for your organization</li> <li>• Understand risks</li> </ul>   |                                 |
| <p><b>12. <u>ORGANIZES PERSONAL WORK</u></b></p> <p><b>Activities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates good time management</li> <li>• Sets priorities effectively</li> <li>• Gets things done</li> <li>• Exhibits calmness &amp; stability</li> </ul> <p><b>Expectations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sense of stability</li> <li>• High output productivity</li> <li>• Organized work space</li> <li>• Word is good to get things done</li> <li>• Others know your priorities</li> <li>• Personal/work life balance</li> </ul>           | <p><b>Assessment Considerations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognize goals &amp; achieving them</li> <li>• Unrealistic workloads / timelines</li> <li>• Recognizing generational expectations</li> <li>• Reflection</li> <li>• Gets things done within time frames</li> <li>• Sets and manages multiple priorities</li> <li>• Get the right things done right</li> <li>• Create a calm and stable environment</li> <li>• Enthusiasm and pride in work</li> <li>• Manages / handles multiple interruptions</li> <li>• Sense of accomplishment</li> </ul> |                                 |