Leadership qualities framework

Guide for those in governance roles

Contents

Introduction

The Leadership Qualities Framework (LQF) was originally published by the National Skills Academy for Social Care in the summer of 2013 (before the NSA's merger with Skills for Care). The aim of the framework was to look at how good leadership behaviours can be developed at all levels, from the frontline to the boardroom.

The framework describes what good leadership looks like in a variety of settings and situations, reflecting the diversity of social care. It demonstrates how these behaviours can be applied, offering a picture of what leadership looks like in various roles, from front-line workers, through first-line and operational leadership to strategic leadership.

The Leadership Qualities Framework (LQF) has a vital role to play in placing leadership at the very heart of social care and driving its development, so that the sector can meet the key challenges of the 21st century.

This publication explores how the guidance can be applied in the governance of social care organisations, with specific reference to chief executive officers, chairs, board members and trustees. It recognises in particular the vital importance of the two LQF dimensions, relevant only for the most senior staff. This is in addition to the first five dimensions which were the focus of the main guide.

The framework's seven 'dimensions'

The framework is based on the structure of the leadership framework developed by the NHS, which includes five qualities that we recognise apply also to all social care workers who need to demonstrate leadership, and two further qualities which apply specifically to senior staff. We have called these qualities 'dimensions'.

☾ ….. the Leadership Qualities Framework places leadership at the very heart of social care thinking driving its development, so we can meet the significant challenges ahead. ☽

Sharon Allen, CEO, Skills for Care

The seven dimensions within the framework are:

1. **Demonstrating personal qualities**
2. **Working with others**
3. **Managing services**
4. **Improving services**
5. **Setting direction**
6. **Creating the vision (senior staff)**
7. **Delivering the strategy (senior staff)**

How to use this guide

This guide outlines how each of the seven dimensions applies to those in governance roles. It utilises a number of job descriptions, chairs, chief executives, board members and trustees to demonstrate how the dimensions apply in practice.

For those who wish to use the guide as an interactive workbook, there are a series of questions on which you can reflect, to think more closely about the issues raised regarding leadership qualities and behaviours for those in strategic roles. To keep the task manageable, it will be sensible to take the questions one dimension at a time. The final two dimensions apply more specifically to the type of governance roles being considered here, so the questions are more complex and so have been distributed across the various sets of ideas in each of those dimensions. However, to aid a 'whole systems' approach, readers might prefer to consider those questions altogether after reading the document through.

Demonstrating personal qualities – it's all about you

Dimension 1 focuses on your own qualities as a leader: developing self-awareness, managing yourself, continuing your professional development and acting with integrity. Those in governance roles need not only to 'talk the talk' but also to 'walk the walk'. Modelling (being seen to practise) the values of the organisation is an important aspect of any leadership role.

■ **Developing self awareness**

Those in governance roles influence the whole organisation and the way others outside see the organisation. They need to have a well-developed sense of the impact of their own behaviour both within and outside the organisation.

■ **Managing yourself**

Those in governance roles need to balance the competing demands of all stakeholders including external, internal and political. This may mean challenging themselves to try new things to become a more effective leader.

■ **Continuing professional development**

Good leaders maintain personal knowledge of, and expertise in, issues pertinent to the work of the organisation. They support the professional development of others in the organisation. They champion reflection, as well as learning from their own experience and the best practice of other organisations.

■ **Acting with integrity**

Strategic leaders in all organisations must consistently establish and champion core ethics and values. They should be authentically warm, genuine, trustworthy, honest, reliable, consistent and caring in all their actions and support this culture across the organisation. Those in governance roles act as valuable ambassadors for their organisations and should personally uphold the highest standards of integrity and probity, demonstrating impartiality, fairness and respect for confidentiality.
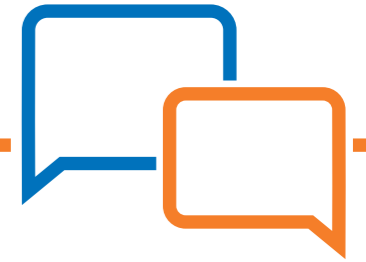
Ask the following questions:

a. How do others, both inside and outside the organisation, view me? How can I measure this? (You might consider using a 360 degree tool to support assessment of your impact.)

b. How do I ensure my continuing professional development (CPD)? Do I have a personal development plan? Do I review my CPD plan and regularly evaluate my effectiveness?

c. Are there areas of expertise that I need to develop? How could I do this?

d. How could I use a mentor to support my reflection and to improve my personal effectiveness?

e. How do I evaluate my impact as an ambassador and effective leader for the organisation?

f. What processes do I have in place to take appropriate action when ethics are breached by others?

Suggested resources

Manager induction standards

Your management tools

Leadership

The Social Care Manager's Handbook

Working with others – we work better when we work together

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Dimension 2 focuses on qualities needed to work well with colleagues both within and outside your organisation: developing networks, building and maintaining relationships, encouraging contribution and working within teams.

■ **Developing networks**

Those in governance roles will demonstrate strong network capabilities in influencing and lobbying on behalf of both organisational and sector issues. They will promote the sharing of information and resources to establish well-informed and effective strategic networks.

■ **Building and maintaining relationships**

People in these roles will promote external engagement and develop collaborative working relationships and partnerships within and across boundaries, providing leadership that promotes a strong customer and stakeholder focus. They will support the creation of the best climate for effective communication within and outside of the organisation, demonstrating how to relay complex and technical information simply and appropriately to varied audiences. They will demonstrate tact and diplomacy with the ability to listen and engage effectively.

■ **Encouraging contribution**

Good leaders in governance roles actively create a culture of co-production, joint responsibility, joint decision-making, support and community participation. They motivate workers and other key stakeholders by their own passion, modelling effective ways of encouraging and valuing contributions from a wide range of internal and external stakeholders.

■ **Acting with integrity**

"Those in higher strategic roles, in addition to boards of trustees, are often asked to build, motivate and inspire effective management teams." They will demonstrate an ability to foster and promote a collaborative team environment, maintaining a personal style that can bring the best out of all teams across the service. They will need to implement effective strategies to hold these teams to account through performance management and a positive organisational culture.
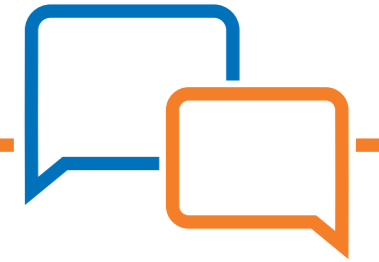
Ask the following questions:

a. How do I measure the effectiveness of the networks / partnerships in which I am involved?

b. How do I measure my communication skills for both internal and external audiences in a range of contexts?

c. How do I model and actively promote coproduction in the organisation?

d. How effective are the teams that I manage? What processes /systems do I have in place to measure and ensure their effectiveness?

e. How do I address issues of accountability for teams in the organisation?

Suggested resources

Principles of workforce integration

Principles of workforce redesign

Community Skills – guide for commissioners

Nominated as Responsible

The Social Care Manager's Handbook

Managing services – tough times mean big decisions

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Dimension 3 focuses on the key qualities needed to manage a service well: planning, managing resources, managing people and managing performance

■ Planning
Those in governance roles will need to support the development of a strategic plan and operating plans for the organisation to take them forward. They should create a culture of shaping everything around the needs, views and desires of the people being supported, within an appropriate governance framework.

■ Managing resources
Good leaders will have a strategic overview of available provision both in their own organisation and externally, which in turn will inform decision-making, planning and the organisation's direction. They will need to be able to identify and maximise opportunities to attract and generate additional sources of funding, ensuring that the organisation is structured and well-resourced to implement the operating plans.

■ Managing people
To engender trust in the organisation's direction and strategy, those in governance roles need to model exemplary behaviour that gets the best out of others, leading to a culture of collective and individual responsibility. They should be prepared to actively lead the cultural change needed to support coproduction with people being supported, carers and the wider public.

■ Managing performance
Strategic leaders need to undertake full performance management of those who report directly to them, along with wider supervision and guidance for those in key roles reporting indirectly to them. This may include allocation and review of work, overseeing training and development, and making decisions about workforce planning and people management across the organisation. They need to recognise good performance but also to take action where performance can be improved, ensuring that lessons are learned and used to inform future plans. They will need to be prepared to make unpopular decisions or recommendations and be willing and able to speak their mind.
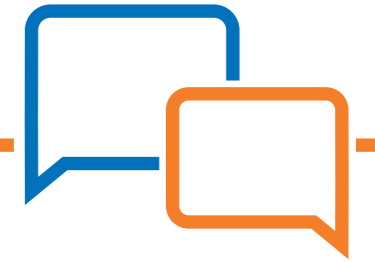
Ask the following questions:

a. How do the strategic and operational plans for the organisation reflect the needs, views and desires of the people who access the services?

b. What tools do I use to evaluate the effectiveness of structures within the organisation to deliver the strategic plans?

c. What systems and processes do I use to monitor and evaluate the effective use of resources? How do I maintain my awareness of external resources and how they can be utilised in delivering the service? How do I ensure there are enough resources to deliver the operating plans to a high standard?

d. How do I recognise good performance in the organisation?

e. What can I learn as I reflect on times when I have made unpopular decisions? How can I use the lessons learned in that experience to inform future actions and decisions?

Suggested resources

Practical approaches to workforce planning workbook

Workforce capacity planning

People performance management toolkit

Culture toolkit

Workforce development strategy

Principles of workforce redesign

Workforce Development Fund

Common core strategic principles for equality and diversity

Values based recruitment

Nominated as Responsible

The Social Care Managers Handbook

Improving services – we all have the power to make a difference

Dimension 4 focuses on what leadership looks like with regard to ensuring the safety of people who access support, critically evaluating , encouraging improvement and innovation, and facilitating transformation.

■ Ensuring the safety of people we support

Those in governance roles need to create a culture where people are prepared to challenge where there are concerns about quality, safety and performance. They need to actively encourage whistleblowing and have in place recognised systems and processes to deal with this effectively, so that lessons can be learned for the organisation and the way it operates.

■ Critically evaluating

It is important in any organisation to build a corporate culture of continuous review, quality and service improvement. Processes need to be implemented to monitor and evaluate real outcomes for people who access the service, actively seeking feedback from all stakeholders. Those in governance roles should model and create an expectation that commitments are kept, both internally and externally.

■ Encouraging improvement and innovation

It is important that those in governance roles support change by enabling market development. Strategic leaders need to have the ability to generate innovative ideas for organisational improvement and the facility to think beyond traditional ways. They should create an ethos that values people at every level of the organisation, modelling distributed leadership and empowering staff. They should lead a development and improvement cycle based on the needs and aspirations of the people being supported, their families, carers, the workforce and the wider community.

■ Facilitating transformation

Those in governance roles need to model the changes expected from others. They need to motivate and engage staff within the organisation to embrace and accomplish change, communicating clearly the reasons for and benefits of transforming the service.

Ask the following questions:

a. How do I continue to support and inspire those responsible for successful delivery of strategic and operational plans?

b. How do I create an organisation- wide culture that values and seeks consultation to support delivery of the strategy?

c. How can I ensure transparency in the decision-making process and in addressing questions about and challenges to the implementation of the strategy?

d. What steps have I taken to monitor and ensure strategic outcomes and to respond to any changes identified?

Suggested resources

The Social Care Commitment

Workforce Development Innovation Fund

Learn from others

Learning to live with risk

Recommendations for CQC Providers Guide

Nominated as Responsible

The Social Care Managers Handbook

Setting direction – weighs up the options and makes a change

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Dimension 5 focuses on the ways that leaders can make change in an informed way by identifying the context of change, applying knowledge and evidence, making decisions and evaluating impact.

■ Identifying the context of the change

Strategic leaders need to have a strong understanding of the challenges and changes that face social care and the impact these might have on the business and service effectiveness. They will need to bring together knowledge from a wide range of sources, examining policy drivers within both social care and other sectors that impact on this.

■ Applying knowledge and evidence

It is important to carry out an analysis of available evidence of good practice and of knowledge of sector drivers. Data and information, both internal and external, can be collated and utilised to support the identification of change for the organisation. Those in governance roles will want to ensure that such an analysis is robust before acting on any outcomes or proposals emanating from the evidence. The resulting analysis may bring challenges to existing systems and processes within the organisation and also to the service delivery itself.

■ Making decisions

Those in governance roles need to exercise sound judgement and effective decision-making in all aspects of their behaviour, and in particular in leading change in the organisation. Good leaders must make decisions based on the available evidence, their own values and the values of the organisation.

■ Evaluating impact

The impact of any change implemented needs to be measured and lessons learned need to be logged and applied to any future decision making. Those in governance roles need to ensure that there are robust and transparent processes to capture and share such an evaluation appropriately and possibly with the wider social care and health community.
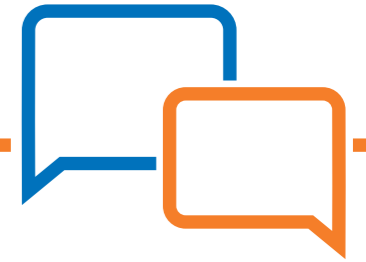
Ask the following questions:

a. How do I identify future challenges that might create a need for change? What information and resources might support me in doing this?

b. How do I collect and utilise data and information from both within and outside the organisation to support the business case for change?

c. How do I access and use evidence-based practice to determine changes to move the service into a new direction?

d. How effective is my decision making? How can I evaluate the impact of my decision making?

e. How is the impact of change measured? What mechanisms can I utilise to do this? How can I make the process transparent? How do I judge the levels of transparency and communication necessary for different outcomes /messages?

Suggested resources

Practical approaches to workforce planning workbook

National Minimum Data Set for Social Care (NMDS-SC)

Workforce outcome measurement model

Using research evidence

Culture toolkit

Creating the vision – so, where do we go next?

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Dimension 6 focuses on how those in senior leadership roles can create a compelling vision for the future by developing a vision for their own organisation, influencing the vision of the wider social care sector, communicating the vision within and across organisations, and embodying the vision.

■ Developing the vision for the organisation

It is vital that those in governance roles are able to see well into the future and to plan the direction for the organisation. To develop the vision they will need to engage closely with colleagues and key influencers, including people who need care and support and the public. A good leader at governance level actively encourages key stakeholders in creating a bold and innovative shared vision, which reflects the future needs and aspirations of the population and the future direction of social care.

Ask the following questions:

a. What is my vision for where the organisation will be
   - in five years?
   - in 10 years?
b. How were all relevant stakeholders involved in forming that vision?
c. How did they support /engage with the vision?
d. How does the vision reflect the core values of social care?
e. Where does the vision fit in the wider social care system?

■ Influencing the vision of the wider social care and health system

Those in governance roles actively participate in and lead debates about the future of social care and related services. They will manage their own political interests, balancing tensions between organisational aspirations and the wider environment. They will shape and influence social care and health priorities and agendas at local, regional and national levels. They have a responsibility to promote the good name and values of the organisation across wider social care.

Ask the following questions:

a. What opportunities have I taken to engage in debate about the future for care and health related services?
b. Who are the key decision-makers influencing future government policy? Do I have regular meetings with them? Am I in a position to shape social care priorities and agendas?
c. How can I influence other key decision-makers?
d. Who are the people in other governance roles with whom I might work in partnership to develop a shared vision of social care's future?
e. How do I promote the good name of the organisation across social care?

■ Communicating the vision

Those in governance roles need to ensure that the whole organisation buys into the vision and that everyone understands their own part to play in it. They communicate well and enthusiastically in ways that are accessible to the different stakeholders for whom the vision is relevant. In their communication they inspire and empower others to own the vision for themselves, to secure joint ownership. They anticipate challenges and constructively address them.

Ask the following questions:

a. How have I communicated the vision?
b. With whom have I communicated and did I communicate in a way that was accessible to them?
c. How did I gain feedback from those with whom I communicated to ensure understanding and engagement?
d. How do I demonstrate that I am excited and enthusiastic about the vision I am communicating?
e. How can I be sure that those with whom I communicate are clear about the impact of the vision on themselves?

■ Embodying the vision

Good leaders show continuing passion and single-mindedness about the vision. They express the vision enthusiastically and energetically. They act as role models, reflecting the values and principles inherent in the vision. Those in governance roles must ensure that their everyday behaviour reflects the vision in board and other strategic meetings, sector-wide meetings and in everyday contact with members of their organisation.

Ask the following questions:

a. How does my behaviour and attitude reflect the values and principles of the vision?

b. How do I demonstrate confidence, self-belief, tenacity and integrity in pursuing the vision?

c. How can I challenge ideas, attitudes and behaviours that are not consistent with the vision?

d. How can I address policies and processes within the organisation that are not consistent with the vision? (This might include symbols, rituals and routines.)
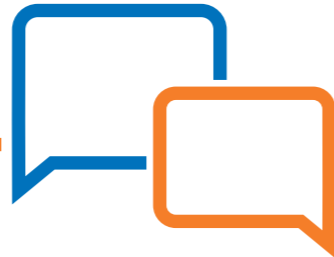
Suggested resources

Principles of workforce integration

The Social Care Commitment

Culture toolkit

Leadership

Nominated as Responsible

Delivering the strategy - finding the best way from A to B

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Dimension 7 focuses on how those in senior leadership roles deliver strategic vision by developing and agreeing strategic plans that place individuals at the heart of the service and ensuring that these plans are then translated into achievable operational plans.

■ Framing the strategy

Those in governance roles have the responsibility to give firm strategic direction to the organisation, setting overall policy, defining goals, setting targets and evaluating performance against agreed targets. They develop the vision of the organisation into achievable goals. They are able to frame the vision in the context of relevant thinking, ideas and best practice to conceptualise how the vision can become a living and workable plan. They can apply 'whole systems' thinking to identify how every part of the organisation can be included in forming a strategy in line with the vision.

Ask the following questions:

a. How do I take steps to understand the culture, history and long term underlying issues for the organisation?

b. How can I apply organisational theory to inform the development of a strategy?

c. What best practice have I applied to the organisation and how do I know it is 'best practice'?

d. Have I considered a range of options to deliver the vision?

■ Developing the strategy

A living and workable strategy must integrate the views of a wide range of stakeholders who need to be passionately engaged. The strategy must be understandable, accessible and sustainable. Those in governance roles need to understand concepts of change management, to identify the readiness of the organisation for change and how change might be managed. In partnership with other board members and senior leaders, governance roles need to manage risks, political sensitivities and environmental uncertainties in developing the vision into strategy. Good leaders are aware of others' agendas, motivations and drivers and can address these in formulating a strategy.

Ask the following questions:

a. How does the strategy activate the whole vision?

b. How does the strategy address risks, political sensitivities and environmental uncertainties?

c. How have I ensured that key people have been engaged in formulating our strategic plans to meet the vision?

d. How can I ensure the strategic plans are achievable and sustainable?

■ Implementing the strategy

Those in governance roles must respond eagerly and constructively to challenges to the strategic plans. They have the responsibility to ensure that policies, processes, systems and resources are in place to successfully deliver the strategic plans. They are not necessarily going to action these themselves, but need to recognise the strengths and weaknesses of individuals within the organisation when identifying those people who can contribute in specific ways to the successful delivery of the strategic plans. They need to recognise accountabilities across the whole organisation and with any external stakeholders, and need to identify and accept their own accountability in particular. Those in governance roles have the responsibility for ensuring that people are held to account for successfully delivering strategic and operational plans. They are accountable for the financial viability of the organisation and for ensuring proper investment of the organisation's funds in any strategic operation. They act as guardians of the organisation's assets and must take all due care over their security, deployment and proper application.

Ask the following questions:

a. How can I ensure that the strategic plans are workable and sustainable?

b. How can I ensure that people with the right skills, experience and knowledge are responsible and accountable for the implementation of specific aspects of the strategic and operational plans?

c. How can I support the implementation of policies, processes, systems and resources to strengthen organisational capabilities for successful delivery of the strategic plans?

d. What steps can I take to anticipate when developments require a change in strategy and to ensure I can demonstrate flexibility in responding quickly and decisively to these developments?

■ Embedding the strategy

Those in governance positions have a key role to play in ensuring strategic plans become integral to the organisation and are reflected in its culture. They should hold a wide overview across the organisation to ensure that conditions exist to sustain changes integral to the successful delivery of the strategy. It is important that they monitor progress and reinforce key messages recognising how and where the strategy has been embraced. They need to set in place systems and processes to evaluate outcomes and capture learning gained when adopting strategic and operational plans.

Ask the following questions:

a. How do I continue to support and inspire those responsible for successful delivery of strategic and operational plans?

b. How do I create an organisation- wide culture that values and seeks consultation to support delivery of the strategy?

c. How can I ensure transparency in the decision-making process and in addressing questions about and challenges to the implementation of the strategy?

d. What steps have I taken to monitor and ensure strategic outcomes and to respond to any changes identified?
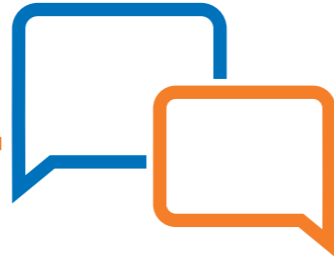
Suggested resources

Principles of workforce integration

The Social Care Commitment

Culture toolkit

Leadership

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Resources

Common core strategic principles for equality and diversity	www.skillsforcare.org.uk/principlesofequalityanddiversity
Community Skills - guide for commissioners	www.skillsforcare.org.uk/developingcommunityskills
Culture toolkit	www.skillsforcare.org.uk/culturetoolkit
Leadership	www.skillsforcare.org.uk/leaders
Learn from others	http://learnfromothers.skillsforcare.org.uk/
Learning to live with risk	www.skillsforcare.org.uk/livingwithrisk
Manager induction standards	www.skillsforcare.org.uk/mis
National Minimum Data Set for Social Care (NMDS-SC)	www.skillsforcare.org.uk/discovernmds
Nominated as Responsible	www.skillsforcare.org.uk/nominatedasresponsible
People Performance Management Toolkit	www.skillsforcare.org.uk/performancemanagement
Practical approaches to workforce planning workbook	www.skillsforcare.org.uk/workforceplanning
Principles of workforce integration	www.skillsforcare.org.uk/principlesofworkforceintegration
Principles of workforce redesign	www.skillsforcare.org.uk/workforceredesign
Recommendations for CQC Providers Guide	www.skillsforcare.org.uk/cqc
The Social Care Commitment	www.thesocialcarecommitment.org.uk
The Social Care Managers Handbook	www.skillsforcare.org.uk/managershandbook
Using research evidence	www.skillsforcare.org.uk/researchevidence
Values based recruitment	www.skillsforcare.org.uk/values
Workforce capacity planning	www.skillsforcare.org.uk/workforceplanning
Workforce Development Fund	www.skillsforcare.org.uk/wdf

Workforce development innovation fund	www.skillsforcare.org.uk/wdif
Workforce development strategy	www.skillsforcare.org.uk/wds
Workforce outcome measurement model	www.skillsforcare.org.uk/measurementmodel
Your management tools	www.skillsforcare.org.uk/managementtools

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