



Sponsor Mindset Assessment

Sponsor(s)¹: _____

Change Initiative: _____



Introduction

During periods of relative stability, leaders typically focus on maintaining productivity and quality. This requires a mindset (frame of reference and priorities) that emphasizes things like employee satisfaction, minimizing disruption, and maintaining best practices. On the other hand, periods of major change are—by definition—highly disruptive, and require a different mindset, one that focuses on achieving realization of the intended outcomes, despite the disruption and discomfort that transition brings. While both mindsets have their place, this assessment is centered on the mindset needed for successfully executing significant change.

The Sponsor Mindset Assessment examines the extent to which the sponsors of a change are exhibiting the frame of reference and priorities required for success. It may be self-administered or administered to groups of people, and it may be used to assess the mindsets of specific sponsors or a set of sponsors.

Instructions

Please write the name of the sponsor you are assessing in the space provided above. A sponsor may be highly effective on one initiative, and ineffective on another so please also write the name of the change initiative for which this sponsor's mindset is being assessed.

Every change has risk associated with it. This assessment measures the risk to realization posed by sponsor mindset. Identifying the specific sponsor mindset risks related to this initiative will allow leaders to focus their attention and resources as needed to mitigate those risks,

¹ Sponsors are those individuals who are able to sanction or legitimize the change for others in the organization.

increasing the likelihood of achieving realization. Each question is followed by a scale from 1 to 10, with “1” indicating “To a great extent” and “10” indicating “Not at all.” Please select the number that best corresponds with your response. Keep in mind that the items are constructed so that the higher the number, the greater the risk. There are no right or wrong answers, so be as objective as you can in characterizing sponsor mindset as you perceive it. When completing this assessment, please don’t respond with answers that reflect what you wish were true; instead, respond with your honest feelings and observations about what is actually taking place. If you are unsure of an answer, give your best estimate based on what you know.

Sponsor Mindset Assessment

1. Firmness

The sponsor(s) understand that major change is not usually accomplished through consensus; strong, definitive leadership is required.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
To a great extent					Not at all				

2. Messiness

The sponsor(s) have a high tolerance for ambiguity, managing paradoxes instead of contradictions, and making tough decisions with insufficient information.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
To a great extent					Not at all				

3. Priorities

The sponsor(s) are willing to delay, reduce the scope of, or reject projects that might compete for mindshare and resources required for the most important initiatives.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
To a great extent					Not at all				

4. Risk

The sponsor(s) require that people honestly portray the true condition of projects and express their concerns early so the issues can be addressed quickly.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
To a great extent					Not at all				

5. Discomfort

The sponsor(s) don't try to keep people happy during change; they focus on helping people succeed despite their discomfort.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
To a great extent					Not at all				

6. Teamwork

The sponsor(s) place a high value on fostering common goals and interdependence, and have a low tolerance for superficial politeness, silo mentality, or territoriality.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
To a great extent					Not at all				

7. Introspection

The sponsor(s) are prepared to transform themselves (learn what they have to do and think differently) in order to transform the organization.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
To a great extent					Not at all				

8. Mistakes

The sponsor(s) acknowledge and learn from their mistakes.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
To a great extent					Not at all				

9. Listening

The sponsor(s) solicit, listen to, and value the perspectives of those being affected by the change.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
To a great extent					Not at all				

10. Urgency

The sponsor(s) set a pace consistent with executing business imperatives—firm timelines, explicit communications, tenaciousness, surfacing problems early, and a bias for action are the norm.

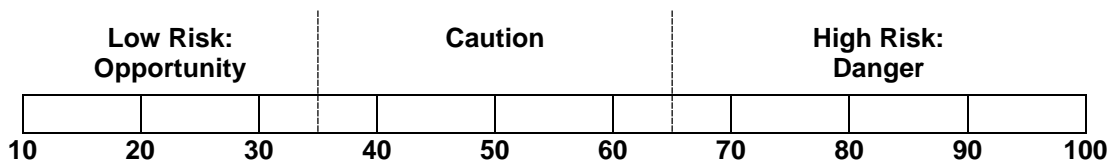
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
To a great extent					Not at all				

I. Scoring

Total your responses: _____

This is the overall Sponsor Mindset Risk Level.

II. Interpretation of Results: Sponsor Mindset Risk Scores



Level of Risk

In assessing risk, it is important to look at the individual mindset scores, as well as the overall level of risk. While the overall score may be in the Low or Moderate Risk range, a High Risk score on an individual item can still put the realization of your change in jeopardy.

If these scores are primarily based on the impressions of the implementation team and/or senior executives, it will be important to gather data from a broader audience to ensure that a complete perspective on the organization's intent is considered.

High Risk: Danger (66 and above)

A score in this range suggests that there are significant problems regarding sponsor mindsets. Carefully review each item with a score of "7" or above to develop a risk mitigation plan. Depending on the specific risk(s), mitigation may include 1:1 coaching and mentoring, training, and/or the administration of appropriate consequences.

Moderate Risk: Caution (36 to 65)

A score in this range suggests that the change is at risk. There is a need to pay particular attention to any items that have scores of "5" or above. Sponsor Mindsets will be a pivotal element in the change's outcome and, therefore, require special attention and resources when planning and executing the implementation steps. It may be helpful to look at the individual items to identify particular problem areas.

Low Risk: Opportunity (10 to 35)

A score in this range suggests that the sponsor(s) are displaying the mindsets required for realization. To further ensure success, special attention should be paid to any individual items with scores above "3."

III. Interpretation of Results: Individual Items

This section allows you to develop profiles that reflects the level of risk to realization that sponsor mindset poses to this change initiative. The higher the score, the higher the risk.

The profile can be used by sponsors to focus attention on addressing the most significant risks. Impediments of this nature can be mitigated through training and/or effective communication by more senior sponsors. The consistent administration of consequences—both positive and negative—can also be effective in shifting sponsor mindsets so that they are causing lower levels of risk.

Plot the individual scores on the grid below. Connect the individual scores with a line to quickly highlight the greatest areas of risk.

Characteristics	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Firmness	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Messiness	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Priorities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Risk	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Discomfort	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Teamwork	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Introspection	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Mistakes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. Listening	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. Urgency	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	I Low Risk: Opportunity			II Caution			III High Risk: Danger			