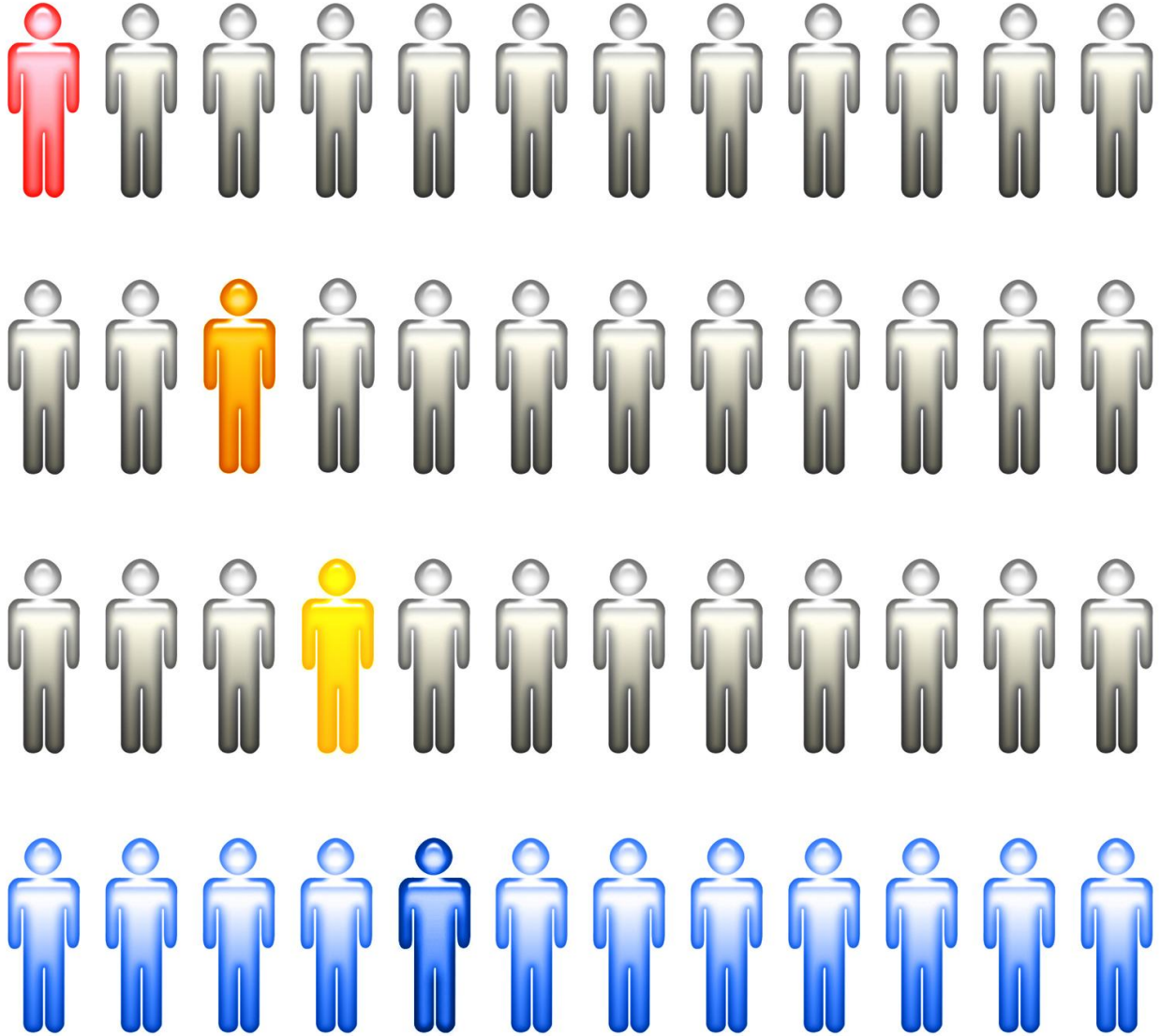




## A CAFC LEADERSHIP RESOURCE



# STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP

## ASSESSMENT GUIDE



# **STRATEGIC LEADER**

## **ASSESSMENT GUIDE**

The challenges of today demand new approaches for fire service leadership. To address this critical issue the Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs, has identified 24 leadership competencies specific to the role of fire and rescue leaders. A subsequent CAFC Leadership survey (2007) validated these competencies and established critical competencies for four specific fire service leader roles:

- Strategic – Chief, Director, Commissioner responsible for the department
- Operational – Deputy, Platoon or District Chief responsible for service delivery
- Tactical – Captain or Supervisor responsible for supervising teams
- Service – Career or Volunteer personnel who deliver services

The **CAFC Leadership Framework** describes the 24 competencies of effective leaders at all levels. These knowledge, skills, abilities and behaviours are categorized into eight leader outcomes and four leadership themes.

### **CAFC Leadership Framework**



The **CAFC Leader Profiles** and **Assessment Guides** can be used by departments as a rapid approach for identifying department leadership needs. These tools can also be used by supervisors and/or individuals for leadership coaching and learning. Gordon A. McIntosh, the CAFC Leadership Development Coordinator is available to help your organization utilize the CAFC leadership tools by:

- Providing fire service leadership insight sessions at **conferences**
- Facilitating **strategic** processes to match leadership with department needs
- Creating a customized CAFC Leadership Model for your department
- Designing and/or delivering **leadership development** programs

Gordon can be reached at [gmcintosh@cafc.ca](mailto:gmcintosh@cafc.ca) & (250) 655-7455. For further information including the CAFC Leadership Development report or to access the CAFC Leadership Map, please go to [www.cafc.ca](http://www.cafc.ca) or contact Don Warden, CAFC Executive Director at (705) 717-8009 or [dwarden@cafc.ca](mailto:dwarden@cafc.ca)



This guide customizes the CAFC Leadership Framework to individuals in or aspiring to the role of **Strategic Leader**. The role includes Fire Chiefs, Directors and Commissioners responsible for overall department direction and effectiveness. Guides for other leader roles can be viewed at [www.cafc.ca](http://www.cafc.ca)

This Strategic Leader Assessment Guide can 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
- **Effective Recruitment** – defining competencies to select ideal candidates with leadership potential
- **Meaningful Recognition** – celebrating success and recognizing others to promote service excellence

**Strategic Leader Assessment** involves two steps:

1. **Reviewing expectations** – core and role competencies 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 Leader Assessment Worksheet (pages 7-10).

Once completed, the leadership assessment can be followed up with a personal leadership learning plan to enhance individual leadership capacity. If used in an organizational context, the results can be used to identify department leadership training needs.



## STEP 1 *Reviewing Expectations*

### **PURPOSE**

To review the essential leadership competencies of Strategic Leaders

### **PROCESS**

1. Review the leadership competencies of a Strategic Leader (pages 7-10)

Core competencies are associated with all four of the CAFC leadership roles. Role competencies are specific to each of the four different roles. Of the thirteen Strategic Leader competencies, seven are core competencies common to all leader roles and three are role competencies specific to the strategic leader with three missing core competencies noted as foundational competencies. These foundational competencies are included because it should not necessarily be assumed that everyone in a strategic leadership role has fully developed these.

### **EXAMPLE**

#### **Core & Role Competencies**

<b>CORE &amp; ROLE COMPETENCIES</b> Competence Level	<b>ASSESSMENT</b> Develop or Improve
1. <b>BUILDS PARTNERSHIPS</b> competency specific to Strategic Leader	
9. <b>COMMUNICATES CLEARLY</b> competency that is common to all roles	
11. <b>LISTENS ACTIVELY</b> foundational competency	

3. Review the expectations (knowledge, skills, behaviours and abilities) associated with the competence level for your leadership role.

\* Note the **CAFC Leadership Map** contains expectations for all competencies described in the CAFC Leadership Framework and is available upon request.

#### **Competence Level**

<b>CORE &amp; ROLE COMPETENCIES</b> Competence Level	<b>ASSESSMENT</b> Develop or Improve
1. <b>BUILDS PARTNERSHIPS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positions the organization to attract partners</li> <li>• Monitors and adjusts strategies and systems to acknowledge stakeholder and partner needs</li> <li>• Establishes strategic partnerships at a variety of levels</li> </ul>	
9. <b>COMMUNICATES CLEARLY</b>	
12. <b>LISTENS ACTIVELY</b>	



## STEP 2 Assessing Competence

### PURPOSE

To determine personal areas for improvement and development

### PROCESS

1. Reflect on your performance for each competency. Consider recent experiences, your last performance evaluation and feedback you may have received from supervisors or subordinates.
2. Consider your performance for each of the 13 Strategic Leader competencies.
  - Areas for Improvement – weaknesses to work on to achieve the competence level required of the position
  - Areas for Development – strengths that should be maximized for current performance or future leadership potential

### EXAMPLE

#### Develop and/or Improve

CORE & ROLE COMPETENCIES Competence Level	ASSESSMENT Develop or Improve	
	YOU	OTHER
10. BUILDS PARTNERSHIPS	IMPROVE	
1. COMMUNICATES CLEARLY	DEVELOP	
12. LISTENS ACTIVELY	DEVELOP/IMPROVE	

3. Specify details of your assessment in terms of skills, abilities, knowledge and behaviors which are associated with the expectations for each competency. Be specific. It is okay to state both improvement and development areas for a competency.

#### Your Assessment

CORE & ROLE COMPETENCIES Competence Level	ASSESSMENT Develop or Improve	
	YOU	OTHER
10. BUILDS PARTNERSHIPS	IMPROVE – regional fire services agreement and negotiation	
1. COMMUNICATES CLEARLY	DEVELOP – coaching officers to engage staff in decision making	
12. LISTENS ACTIVELY	DEVELOP – handling diverse stakeholders IMPROVE – feedback to ensure understanding	



- Solicit the views of your mentor, supervisor, peers and subordinates 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 columns two and three blank. Always discuss the comments from others to ensure your understanding of their assessment.

### Other's Views

#### EXAMPLE

CORE & ROLE COMPETENCIES Competence Level	ASSESSMENT Develop or Improve	
	YOU	OTHER
10. BUILDS PARTNERSHIPS	IMPROVE – <i>regional fire services agreement and negotiation</i>	OK
1. COMMUNICATES CLEARLY	DEVELOP – <i>coaching officers to engage staff in decision making</i>	IMPROVE Staff reports to Council
12. LISTENS ACTIVELY	DEVELOP – <i>handling diverse stakeholders</i> IMPROVE – <i>feedback to ensure understanding</i>	DEVELOP Process for two-way dialogue

The results of this Strategic Leader Assessment process may be used to:

- Develop a personal learning plan
- Review leadership expectations within an employee appraisal process
- Assist supervisors in developing individuals with succession potential
- Guide supervisors who are mentoring an individual with performance issues

For more assistance in using the CAFC Leadership Framework and tools in your department contact the CAFC Leadership Development Coordinator at [gmcintosh@cafc.ca](mailto:gmcintosh@cafc.ca) & (250) 655-7455 or Don Warden, CAFC Executive Director at (705) 717-8009 or [dwarden@cafc.ca](mailto:dwarden@cafc.ca)



## STRATEGIC LEADER ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET

<b>ROLE &amp; CORE COMPETENCIES</b> <i>Competence level</i>	<b>ASSESSMENT - Develop or Improve</b>	
	<b>YOU</b>	<b>OTHER</b>
<b>1. COMMUNICATES CLEARLY</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uses understanding of issues to identify the most effective method of conveying information</li> <li>• Seeks opportunities to collaborate with others to transmit important messages to the community</li> <li>• Supports opportunities to develop and improve internal and external communication processes</li> <li>•</li> </ul>		
<b>2. SETS DIRECTION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicates key standards and expectations to achieve department goals</li> <li>• Establishes challenging and relevant targets for the department, senior officers and service units</li> <li>• Inspires future thinking and focuses resources and attention to achieve a desired future amidst competing demands</li> <li>•</li> </ul>		
<b>3. CREATES A SHARED VISION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seeks out and develops opportunities to share goals and achievements through partnerships</li> <li>• Establishes direction and achieves member commitment to achieve results</li> <li>• Ensures that the structure and operations of the organization accurately reflect its vision</li> <li>•</li> </ul>		

Core Competencies (7)

Shared with all other leader roles

Role Competencies (3)

Specific to Strategic Leader role

Foundational Competencies (3)

Core competencies not identified in Strategic Leader Profile

- Blank bullets - definition of each competency may be expanded upon for further customization



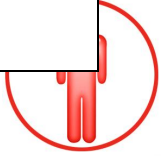
## STRATEGIC LEADER ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET

<b>ROLE &amp; CORE COMPETENCIES</b> <i>Competence level</i>	<b>ASSESSMENT - Develop or Improve</b>	
	<b>YOU</b>	<b>OTHER</b>
<b>4. BUILDS TRUST</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creates a culture that fosters shared standards of ethics and professional values</li> <li>• Shows willingness to become personally involved in difficult interpersonal situations where appropriate</li> <li>• Ensures that human resource and personnel policies and systems are fair and inclusive</li> <li>•</li> </ul>		
<b>5. INSPIRES OTHERS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fosters an environment where people feel personally committed to achieve results</li> <li>• Establishes challenging and relevant targets for the organization</li> <li>• Mentors future leaders by taking time to share knowledge, feedback and leadership opportunities</li> </ul>		
<b>6. INFLUENCES OTHERS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruits opinion leaders to assist in creating required department change</li> <li>• Takes multiple actions to affect the outcome of complex situations</li> <li>• Guides processes with legal, ethical and value-based principles to achieve the department agenda</li> <li>•</li> </ul>		
<b>7. UNDERSTANDS THE PUBLIC INTEREST</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fosters a climate in which members of the public feel safe to contribute their ideas</li> <li>• Engages external stakeholders to support the organization's strategic direction</li> <li>• Applies an understanding of power and influence and relationships inside and outside the department to accomplish goals</li> <li>•</li> </ul>		



## STRATEGIC LEADER ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET

<b>ROLE &amp; CORE COMPETENCIES</b> <i>Competence level</i>	<b>ASSESSMENT - Develop or Improve</b>	
	<b>YOU</b>	<b>OTHER</b>
<b>8. NURTURES COMMUNITY RELATIONS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Champions initiatives that build community support</li> <li>• Maintains networks of strategic partners in a wide range of public and private sector organizations</li> <li>• Models the importance of relationship-building to the success of initiatives</li> <li>•</li> </ul>		
<b>9. UNDERSTANDS CORE BUSINESS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Takes into account the distinct nature of fire services when deciding on a course of action</li> <li>• Ensures that the structure and operations of the department accurately reflect core values</li> <li>• Considers how present organizational goals and strategies might be affected by future trends</li> <li>•</li> </ul>		
<b>10. BUILDS PARTNERSHIPS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positions the organization to attract partners to deliver services</li> <li>• Adjusts strategies and systems to acknowledge stakeholder and partner needs</li> <li>• Establishes strategic partnerships at the regional and provincial levels</li> <li>•</li> </ul>		



## STRATEGIC LEADER ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET

<b>ROLE &amp; CORE COMPETENCIES</b> <i>Competence level</i>	<b>ASSESSMENT - Develop or Improve</b>	
	<b>YOU</b>	<b>OTHER</b>
<p><b>11. LISTENS ACTIVELY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solicits contrary opinions to enhance understanding of situations, events or change</li> <li>• Establishes policies that encourage open communication practices to ensure that new ideas are taken into consideration</li> <li>• Establishes processes to seek and consider the views of individuals and agencies through two-way dialogue</li> <li>•</li> </ul>		
<p><b>12. SHARES LEADERSHIP</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishes and conveys the principles of shared leadership, openness and trust</li> <li>• Mentors future leaders</li> <li>• Seeks out and develops opportunities to share goals and achievements</li> <li>•</li> </ul>		
<p><b>13. ENCOURAGES OTHERS ABILITIES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishes or improves programs or materials to respond to training or developmental needs</li> <li>• Creates opportunities for staff to interact with senior leaders and external resources</li> <li>• Establishes challenging and relevant targets for the department</li> <li>•</li> </ul>		