Event 1
Assess and Enhance Your Readiness
To Be a Facilitator

When and Why To Use This Event

Who conducts this event. The facilitator.

Intent. One intent of this event is to determine your readiness and capability to be a process facilitator for a district (school system and community). Another intent is to become more knowledgeable about yourself, understanding that critical self-examination is an integral and continuous part of the change process. A third intent is for you to design, develop and implement a program for enhancing your capabilities as a facilitator. And a fourth is to create an awareness of how important continuous assessment of readiness is, while at the same time understanding that your readiness as a facilitator is a continual learning process integral to the success of a systemic change process.

When. We recommend that this event be completed prior to all other events, and before every change effort. It is important for both internal and external facilitators.

Context. This event should be done as soon as you decide to become a facilitator of systemic change. Assuming you decide to proceed, it is followed by making a preliminary contact with a school district to determine if you and the district want to work together (Event 2). Then if you decide there is a possibility for a relationship, you will assess the readiness of the school district for systemic change (Activity 3.1) before deciding whether or not you and the district will commit to a long-term working relationship, formalized with a negotiated contract (Activity 3.2).

Synopsis. First, you conduct a self-assessment using a set of heuristics organized in three broad areas: knowledge, personal factors, and group-processing skills. Second, you determine which areas require additional professional development as a prerequisite to engaging in facilitation and which areas require ongoing development during the district's change process. Third, you develop a professional development program based on the needs identified in your readiness assessment.
Rationale. Systemic change is very different from traditional school change, and its facilitation requires strong conceptual and process skills and knowledge. It also requires the right mindsets and attitudes associated with systems thinking and practice. Furthermore, as the school district evolves and changes, you must constantly redesign who you are in order to co-evolve with the district. If you skip this event, you will likely find yourself constantly struggling under the weight of being ill-prepared and uninformed as to the complexities of process facilitation. Also, the district will be at a disadvantage without a facilitator with the capabilities to guide them through the difficult process.

Implied Values. Systemic change, personal change, facilitator readiness, facilitator as process guide (not expert), facilitation as different from consultation, professional growth and development (capability building), self-renewal.

Prerequisites. None.

Calendar Time. 1-4 weeks
Activity 1.1
Assess Your Own Readiness
To Be a Facilitator

When and Why To Use This Activity

Who conducts this activity. The facilitator.

Intent. The intent of this activity is to determine your readiness and capability to be a process facilitator for a district embarking on the change journey. Another intent is to become more knowledgeable about yourself, understanding that critical self-examination is an integral and continuous part of the change process. This means a constant self-assessment during the change process.

Context. After you assess your own readiness as a facilitator in this activity, you will design, develop and implement a program for enhancing your readiness.

Synopsis. This activity entails a self-assessment using a set of heuristics organized in three broad areas: knowledge, personal factors, and group-processing skills. It also entails determining which areas require additional professional development as a prerequisite to engaging in facilitation and which areas require ongoing development throughout the district's change process.

Rationale. It is difficult to improve your readiness without first assessing it.

Prerequisites. None.

Calendar Time. 1-4 weeks
Goals

To determine what areas of personal and professional growth are most critical for enhancing your ability to facilitate systemic change.

To decide whether or not you are prepared to facilitate systemic change.

Process

This readiness self-assessment process is designed for you as the lead facilitator who will work directly in a district (school system and community) that has decided to undertake change. This process is also important for anyone whom you might bring on board for short-term roles in facilitating the change process or to serve as a co-facilitator with you. This self-assessment is but the first component of a process of continuous improvement and self-renewal (see Unit 3).


Think about your past facilitation experiences and identify specific areas where you wish you had done better. You may find it useful to contact individuals you worked for or with in change efforts and ask for their opinions related to your role and responsibilities. This may help to objectify or at least balance your self-assessment. The following are some specific suggestions:

- List your past and most recent experiences in working with school districts involved in change, and identify the scope and breadth of change for each.
- Identify the types of change models and processes you have worked with, determining the role you played and your responsibilities.
- Summarize the skills and knowledge you needed in order to work with those change efforts, listing the different categories.
- Consider how much of your past and current experience was/is process facilitation and how much was/is a consultant or expert service (helping them develop solutions versus you providing them with solutions).
- Determine whether any of your experiences were with systemic change or systems design.

All of these may help you to identify any aspects of your mental models of change that limit your ability to be a good process facilitator and therefore must be overcome.

(Time: 2 hours)

(Materials and resources: Personal work space, a note pad or computer, historical documents of change experiences)
2. Assure you have met the prerequisites for self-assessment.

Look at each of the prerequisites for self-assessment (see Appendix 1.1A) to make sure you are ready to conduct the self-assessment.

(Time: 1 hour)
(Materials and resources: Personal work space)


Review Unit I, including "Logic of the Change Process" and "Overview of the Change Process," paying attention to the summary of discrete and continuous events. Review each event under "Discrete Events," building your understanding of the complexity of the change process. Also, carefully consider each of the values identified under "Guiding Values of the Process."

(Time: 2-6 hours)
(Materials and resources: Personal work space)

4. Rank your category priorities.

Assess your readiness for facilitating systemic change by carefully considering each of the three major categories on the next page and ranking which category would be most important for you to further develop. Use your preliminary self-assessment data (from Step 1) to guide or inform your self-assessment on each category.

Then, on the same page, tentatively identify subcategories for which you would benefit most by enhancing your knowledge, and put an H for High next to each.

(Time: 1/4 hour)
(Materials or resources: Personal work space, preliminary self-assessment data)
Categories of Capabilities

Rank the following three categories, using 1 as highest priority for your development and 3 as lowest. Then tentatively put an H (for high) next to each subcategory that you might benefit most from working on. Each subcategory is addressed in greater detail in step 5.

**Knowledge/skill category**

Ranking: _____

Often districts have a history of working with consultants in a “solve the problem for us” capacity or “doctor-patient” relationship where a diagnosis is provided, and a treatment prescribed. Facilitation differs from consultation in that you, as the facilitator, are not the resident expert but a process guide. Whereas consultation calls for an expert knowledge base, generally in one or a few areas, facilitation calls for you to be well grounded in many knowledge/skill areas, including:

- systems thinking
- educational systems design
- language of change
- dialogue and design conversation
- group psychodynamics
- evaluation

**Personal Growth**

Ranking: _____

A second category of importance to facilitation relates to your own personal growth, which includes:

- suspending biases and judgments
- deep listening
- self-reflection
- self-inquiry
- disclosure
- managing transitions
- global consciousness
- self-renewal

**Process Engagement**

Ranking: _____

A third category of importance relates to process engagement, which includes:

- individual, team and organizational learning
- leadership
- managing change
- creating contextual understanding
- building and sustaining community
5. **Rank your capabilities within your highest priority category and subcategories.**

For your highest priority subcategories within your highest priority category, identify the capabilities that would be most important for you to further develop (see next 9 pages). Continue to use your preliminary self-assessment data (from Step 3) to guide or inform your self-assessment on each capability.

Then repeat this process for any high priority subcategories within the other two categories.

(Time: 1 hour)
(Materials or resources: Personal work space, preliminary self-assessment data)

6. **Refine your profile of readiness.**

Review the capabilities you have identified as high priority for your professional development, and make any final changes, taking into account your earlier assessment of past experiences in working with school districts. In Activity 1.2 you will begin to design a professional development program for building your capability as a facilitator in the weak areas you have identified here.

(Time: 1/2 half hour)
(Materials and resources: Personal work space, preliminary profile)

7. **Decide when to initiate a project.**

Make a tentative decision about when to identify a school district to work with, based on your level of readiness.

8. **Begin a reflective journal.**

Record your thoughts about this activity and about your readiness to facilitate a systemic change effort.
Capabilities

These capabilities are presented in the form of a self-assessment profile. We hope you will add other capabilities that you think are important. Place an X in the box next to each capability that you feel is of high priority to work on before you initiate a project.

Knowledge and Skills

A. Systems thinking and practice

Ranking: ______

Do you understand the concept of systems (social systems and human activity systems)?
Do you understand schools as social systems?
Are you willing to embrace systems thinking?
Do you have a mindset for systems thinking and practice?
Do you know the difference between systemic and non-systemic (mechanistic) thinking?
Do you understand the concepts of embeddedness, interdependence, and interrelatedness?
Do you understand the relationship between a system and its component parts (subsystems)?
Do you understand the relationship between a system and its environment (supersystem)?
Do you understand that a part of a system derives its meaning and purpose from the whole?
Do you understand the implications of systems thinking for educational change?
Do you see the change process focusing on change of the system rather than change within or on the system?
Do you believe that reductionistic and mechanistic views of the world must be shifted to more holistic and systemic views of the world?
Do you see your relationship to change as a person working with the system rather than on the system to effect change?

B. Educational system design

Ranking: ______

Do you know what educational systems design (ESD) is?
Do you understand the difference between an instructional systems design approach and an educational systems design approach?
Do you understand that ESD as a process is also a type of individual, group, and organizational learning?
Do you understand the difference between design and planning?
Is your mindset one that supports stakeholder participation in the process?
How willing are you to allow stakeholders to develop an authentic ownership of the process?
Do you believe design should focus on process rather than on product?
How well do you understand the concept of ideal systems design?
How well do you understand the relation of design to creating human activity systems?
Are you well grounded in ESD, enough to assist novice stakeholders in the design of a new system?
Do you have experience with ESD in school districts?
Are you willing to embrace the ideal of ESD as an ongoing continuous process?

C. Language

How well do you understand the importance of language in the process of change?
Do you have a particular change language that you use (i.e., Educational System Design has a specific terminology—terms, concepts, words, etc.)?
Do you have a strong literacy in systems and educational systems design language?
Are you aware of the importance of working with stakeholders in identifying their existing languages of change (which are often non-systemic) and then constructing a new systems language for change (ESD)?
Do you understand how language usage contributes to or constrains conceptual change (change in mindsets and mental models)?
Are you knowledgeable about the use of such rhetorical devises as metaphor, simile, and analogy in effecting change within individuals and groups?
Are you willing to set aside your own language of change, and develop a systems language for change?
Are your verbal and written language skills appropriate for the intense communications necessary for this process?

D. Conversation

How well do you understand the difference between dialogue, discussion, and design conversation?
Are you able to explain the difference between designing conversations and engaging in a design conversation?
Can you design a change conversation that leads to creating a vision for a new system?
Do you have the process skills to facilitate conversations between individuals and within groups?
Are you skilled in carrying on focused and meaningful conversations?
Are you skilled in facilitating various types of conversations for data collection, sharing of knowledge, and designing change?
Do you understand the importance of conversation in the systemic change process?
Do you feel comfortable in mediating tensions and conflicts that often arise in conversational settings?

E. Evaluation and questioning assumptions  

Do you understand the difference between traditional/conventional program evaluation and systemic evaluation?
Do you understand the interdependent and interrelated nature of evaluation to systemic change?
Does your mental model concerning the scope and breadth of evaluation include a systems approach to evaluation?
Do you think stakeholder participation in evaluation is good?
Are you comfortable with critical inquiry and examining political assumptions, theoretical commitments, and ethical concerns?
Do you have a mindset that supports qualitative as well as quantitative methods?
How well do you understand positive feedback systems in process of evaluation?
Do you understand that evaluation and critical inquiry are essential to the types of learning implicit to systemic change?
Do you understand how to conduct a process evaluation? Context evaluation? Self-assessment process (for yourself as well as to facilitate the process for others)?
Do you have knowledge in self-evaluation, participatory action research (and action learning)?
Are you comfortable with your conceptual and process skills and knowledge such that you could create and sustain a stakeholder-driven evaluation system?
Personal Growth

F. Suspension of biases—deep underlying assumptions and judgments  Ranking: ____

How well do you understand what biases and assumptions are, and how they impact your choices?
Do you know what your particular biases are related to educational change?
Are you aware of how biases may have a positive or negative impact on the change process, and how to tell the difference?
Do you know how to control your biases?
Do you understand the importance of suspending your biases when working with stakeholders in creating their new system?
Do you understand the importance of suspending not only your biases but the judgment of other persons particular assumptions and mindsets?
Are willing to honor the diversity of mindsets while recognizing the importance of creating a commonly held mindset?
Do you understand that your biases can stand between you, the stakeholders, and a successful change process?
Are you skilled in identifying your own biases, and knowing when they are influencing decisions and how the process is being facilitated?

_______________________________________________________________________

G. Reflection (self and collective)  Ranking: ______

How well do you understand the process of reflective practice?
Are you knowledgeable in applying reflective practice to systems practice?
Do you understand what self-reflection and collective reflection are?
Do you have experience in reflective practice on a personal level? On a group or organizational level?
Do you understand that systemic change in a system often begins by individuals in the system reflecting on their past experiences with change, and beginning to learn from those experiences?
Are you comfortable with engaging in your own self-reflective process and personal change?
Are you aware that self-inquiry and critical inquiry are companions to reflective practice?
What level of knowledge do you have in critical inquiry?
Do you understand the role reflective practice in the evaluative component of systemic change?
Do you understand how reflective practice contributes to individual, team, and organizational learning?

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H. Reflexivity  

Ranking: ______

Do you know the concept of reflexivity?  
Do you understand that as the system engages in change you must change with it?  
Are you aware of the impact of context on shaping and being shaped by a process like systemic change?  
Are you aware that your assumptions, mindsets, attitudes, etc. must change in alignment with or response to need changes of the change process?  
Is your mindset one that sees your role outside of the system—more as an object-subject relationship? Or do you see your role inside the system—as part of the system under change? If you see yourself outside the system, then reflexivity isn't present, but if you see yourself as part of the system under change there is a reflexive relationship present.  
Do you understand that the level of systems thinking you apply to the process helps to determine the strength of relationships built as well as the softness of boundaries that exist?

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I. Disclosure  

Ranking: ______

Do you have the knowledge and skills to engage yourself and others in self-disclosure?  
Do you have real-world experience in disclosure methods or techniques?  
Are you aware that self-disclosure requires building trust relationships with yourself and other persons?  
Do you have the skills to work with group process and facilitate group dynamics?  
Are you willing to engage in self-disclosure as part of the self-reflective and self-renewing process of systemic change?  
Do you understand that disclosure is often threatening and uncomfortable for people?  
Do you understand the relationship of disclosure to suspending biases and assumptions?  
How good are your conversation and language skills in the are of personal and group psychodynamics?
J. Global Consciousness  

Do you know what type of consciousness (world view or mindset) you have?  
Do you know why you have this type and what contributes to its prominence in your life?  
What is your current level of understanding about global consciousness? Other types of consciousness?  
Do you understand the importance that creating a global consciousness has for systemic change?  
How good are your skills for working with people in a school district and community to create and sustain a global or systemic world view?  
Do you understand the difficulties of changing a person's type of consciousness holds for you as a facilitator?  
Do you understand how language and thought, thinking and learning contribute to your current level of consciousness?  
Do you understand that changing your way of thinking directly influences your conscious awareness of your relationship with your environment?

K. Self-renewal  

What is your existing level of knowledge about self-renewal?  
What renewal processes do you currently employ for your own growth and learning?  
Do you understand the importance of self-renewal in the systemic change process?  
Do you have the skills and knowledge necessary to assist a school district and community in developing and implementing a self-renewing ethic and process?  
Do you understand the relationship between a self-renewing system and creating a sustainable community?  
What experience have you had with self-renewing systems?  
Do you understand what positive feedback systems are and their relationship to self-renewal?  
Do you understand how the concept of self-renewal is important to designing a new school as a human activity system?
Process Engagement

L. Community Ranking: _____

- What are your group-process skills?
- What are your collaboration and team building skills?
- What are your community building skills?
- Do you understand the difference between a group, collaborative, and community?
- Do you know the difference between have a sense of community and actually being a community?
- Do you understand that building community is a stakeholder-based process that may go through several phases before a true community exits?
- What skills do you have for assisting in sustaining a community?
- Do you have strong interpersonal skills?
- Do you value diversity?
- What knowledge and skills do you have for empowerment in building community?
- Do you understand the power of vision in creating a sustainable community?
- Do you understand the importance of dialogue in building community?
- Are you skilled at working with people in creating strong group dynamics?
- Do you understand the importance of social tolerance—attitude—that is supportive of openness and sets aside prejudices?
- How are your relationship management skills—both relationship with yourself and with others?

M. Context (Social dynamics) Ranking: _____

- What is your understanding of context and its relationship to systemic change?
- What skills do you have in assessing or evaluating contexts for change?
- How much experience do you have in evaluating contexts?
- Do you know the difference between culture, climate, and context?
- What do you understand about the importance of context—the socio-cultural dynamics—to educational systems design?
- Do you understand that climate is the perceived wellness (psychological state) of a system?
- Do you understand that culture is the collectively held values and beliefs, assumptions—or normative standards, and the artifacts or creations of a social system?
- Do you understand that context encompasses the climate and culture as well as the dynamic nature of the social structures?
- Do you understand the relationship of language and context?
- How well do you understand that creating a change or design context—neutral space for creativity—is critical to the success of systemic change?
Do you have the skill and knowledge to facilitate stakeholders in creating a contextual understanding of their district and community?

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_______________________________________________________________________

N. Managing Change

Do you know the difference between facilitation, consultation, and management of change?
What is your current mindset about managing change?
What is your level of skill and knowledge about managing change?
What understanding do you have about managing individual versus group, organizational, and systemic change?
Do you know the difference between internal change or personal psychological transitions and external change?
What skills and experience do you have in assisting with the management of personal psychological transitions?
How well do you manage your own personal changes?
Do you have strong group process and psychodynamic skills related to conceptual change and skill development?
How prepared are you to assist stakeholders in assuming responsibility for their own change process?
Do you see yourself as a person responsible for change, or to and with stakeholders for change?
Are you willing to change your mindset about managing change?

_______________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________

O. Leadership

What is your personal mindset of leadership?
Do you understand the different archetypes of leadership such as designer, steward, facilitator, empowerer, follower, etc.?
Do you have knowledge and experience in building such skills as systems thinking, shared visioning, surfacing and testing mental models, personal mastery, team learning, system design, language and communication, etc.?
Do you understand the importance of a committed leadership to the success of systemic change?
Do you know how to foster leadership commitment?
Do you understand the dynamic relationship between leader and followers?
What skills do you have in working with diverse types of district and community leadership in effecting change?
How well do understand the process of participatory and democratic leadership?
Are you comfortable with working within conflicting settings where leadership mindsets may be unaligned with the implied value of stakeholder participation?
Do you have the experience to facilitate and mediate the tensions of change?
Do you support a divers broad-base participation of stakeholders as essential to systemic change?
What experiences do you have with school district leadership and change?
What skills and knowledge do you have in developing leadership for systemic change?
Are you willing to change your mindset about leadership?

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P. Learning Organization  
Ranking: _____
(individual, team or group, and organizational learning)

What way do you learn best?
What is your mindset for how individual, groups, or organizations learn best?
Do you understand the importance of how individuals learn in relationship to how groups or teams learn?
How strong is your knowledge and understanding of organizational learning?
Do you understand how individual learning links to organizational learning?
What experience do you have in building learning organizations (communities)?
How strong is your knowledge and skills in experiential learning?
Do you know what adaptive, single-loop, generative, double-loop, and deutero learning are?
What experience do you have in working with group and team learning processes?
Do you understand the relationship of organizational learning and systemic change?
What capabilities do you have for evaluating or conducting an assessment of how a school district learns?
How well do you understand the linkages between educational system design, evaluation, learning (all types), and systemic change?
Do you understand that creating and sustaining a new human activity system (educational system) is dependent on the strength of the learning infrastructure?

______________
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Potential Problems with the Process

The following are some problems you may anticipate in conducting this process:

• Self-critical examination is threatening and may uncover some parts of your identity or past that are uncomfortable or too revealing.

• It is not easy working with yourself as the focus of an assessment process, especially when the nature of the assessment may be covering unfamiliar terrain.

• Unintentional self-deception may bias the readiness self-assessment process.

• Similarly, current mindsets about how change should be accomplished in school districts and communities may impact the self-assessment process.

• The prerequisites may be difficult to assimilate for the self-assessment.

• There may be some strong conflicts between your experience and knowledge and the "Capabilities" outlined as important to facilitating systemic change.

• It is particularly difficult to assess capabilities that range across so many different dimensions.
Understandings

Given the importance of having the capabilities necessary to facilitate systemic change, we offer the following questions representing specific understandings you may find useful to develop. Again, please do not feel you have to use these understandings, and we hope you will identify other understandings you think are important. We encourage you to carefully consider why you are accepting, rejecting, modifying, or adding each understanding.

A. The role of process facilitation

How does the role of process facilitator differ from consultant or expert?

B. Assessing facilitator readiness

What kinds of conceptual knowledge and process knowledge (including mindsets, skills, and attitudes) are most important to assess?

What capabilities do you have and which will you have to develop?

C. The need for readiness as a facilitator

The need to continue to foster understanding of systemic or systemic change.

The need to continue to foster the understandings of facilitating systemic change developed with your readiness assessment.

The need to continue to develop your capabilities as a facilitator, adding to the conceptual/process skill and knowledge that you have acquired.

D. The nature of facilitator readiness

The need to continue to assess your readiness as a facilitator periodically throughout the change effort or when beginning a new change effort.

Individuals who serve as co-facilitators should undertake the facilitator readiness assessment as well as lead facilitators.
Appendix 1.1A
Prerequisites

The following are some prerequisites for engaging in your self-assessment.

a. Relationship with "self"

Do you have a good relationship with yourself? Specifically, is your self-esteem in a good space? Do you value yourself and have a positive self-attitude? Are there any personal or professional problems that are dominating your life that might interfere in conducting the self-assessment for readiness? Such problems might include a major life transition (e.g., divorce or death in your family) or a stressed relationship with someone significant in your life.

Emotional and psychological stability are important factors when undertaking a self-assessment. Ultimately your level of self-security will have implications for your role and relationship in facilitating others in a systemic change process. An unhappy or unhealthy relationship with yourself will in turn feed into the relationships you have with others. Engaging in self-disclosure, self-reflection, and other elements of your readiness assessment require a healthy internal "self" who can meet the demands and intensity of the process. Most importantly, self-assessment requires a level of honesty and truth about yourself that may not be possible if there are personal problems competing for energy and psychological space.

b. Relationship with "others"

Do you work well with people on a continuous basis? Are your interpersonal skills strong and well suited for working across diverse stakeholder groups, including teachers, administrators, students, parents, and community members? Are you secure in working with people who may place heavy demands on your process skills and knowledge, assisting them to change systemically? Are you a sensitive person capable of deep listening and authentic hearing when others have a need to share? Are you well equipped to facilitate group dynamics and process? Do you have the capability to deal with diverse values, beliefs, and assumptions, challenging existing mindsets in guiding ways that enable the change process?

The readiness assessment will focus on your capabilities to work with others. Systemic change is a people-centered process that requires you to work directly and often intensely with large numbers of people of long periods of time. Realizing the importance of working with others before you begin the assessment process will keep enable you to determine your current capabilities and hopefully be more sensitive to your own personality style. There is nothing easy about facilitation or assisting others in changing deeply ingrained value and belief systems. But systemic change begins recognizing your own values and beliefs, attitudes, and culturally entrenched mindsets. If you do not relate well to others, whatever the situation, then you may find yourself overlooking many important capabilities essential to the facilitation process.
c. Commitment to systemic change

**History:** How much experience have you had in working with school districts and systemic or systemic change? What types of change efforts have you worked with? What are the specific models of change you are grounded in? What was your role, relationship, and responsibility while working with the school districts? Do you have any immovable beliefs about change? If so, what are they?

**Future:** How much are you willing to let go of in order to become a facilitator for systemic change? Are you willing to make a commitment to systemic or systemic change? Are you willing to seek necessary professional growth and renewal experiences to change yourself?

A commitment to systemic change requires that the facilitator first undertake to critically self-examine who she/he is, and then begin to change their "self" at deep systemic levels. It is threatening, often full of internal conflict, and can challenge ones self-identity. This may mean setting aside rigid mindsets and attitudes before engaging in the assessment process. You may have strong consultant oriented way of working with school districts that could create obstacles to a self-assessment of readiness. Biases could cloud your judgment or cause you to preclude looking at certain capabilities as important.

d. Openness to self-disclosure

How comfortable and willing are you to disclose your experiences and the personal truths you associate with those experiences?

Self-trust is a key characteristic of a facilitator and plays a critical role in the self-assessment. Also, the willingness to engage in authentic self-critical examination is premised on your honesty in disclosure of self-truths about past experiences. Being able to "unconceal" your assumptions and suspend them so as not to bias the process is not easy.

e. Self-deception

How honest are you about your strengths and weaknesses, about the capabilities that you have as a facilitator and those you will need to develop?

One the greatest dangers in any self-assessment is that you might engage in varying levels of self-deception about your abilities depending on the needs you have to become a facilitator, or other driving factors. If the Facilitator Readiness Profile that you develop is founded on a self-deception about your capabilities to be a process guide, then it will be difficult for you to function in this role, and you will most likely experience problems in building sustainable relationships as well as carrying out your responsibilities.
f. Responsibility

Are you a responsible person who meets her/his obligations with a high level of professionalism? Are you respectful of others' responsibilities and give appropriate respect to professional/client relationships?

Being a responsible person in your professional actions is unequivocally one of the most important prerequisites for a facilitator. Being responsible also plays a large role in the self-assessment process. Being mindful and respectful of others' responsibilities, allowing the proper space for them to carry out their responsibilities is critical.

Do you see yourself as a person responsible for change in a school district, or a person responsible to and with the district for change?

This is an issue of control and power that often plagues the facilitation relationship, and has implications for ownership of the change process. Understanding the balance of responsibility at this point is very important to your undertaking the readiness assessment. How you see your responsibility in a change process can directly influence or bias self-assessment of your capabilities. Being a facilitator is about guiding others in the process of systemic change, realizing that you are only a guest and not a permanent resident. Assuming responsibility for the change process gives way to an expertism approach that can move the school district and change process in a dependency relationship. Being responsible to or with connotes a relationship where you provide support for the stakeholders as they navigate through the challenges of systemic change.

g. Willingness for growth and renewal

How willing are you to change yourself, and undergo your own redesign as a person and professional working with others in change? Are you willing to take risks and challenge your own prior knowledge and experience base with respect to change? Do you see yourself as a "learner" each time you work with a new school district in change? Or do you see yourself as the "learned" who brings all the knowledge necessary?

If you see yourself as the "learner," then you see each new relationship as an opportunity to grow and evolve with the school district and community. Self-renewal means that you have a secure relationship with your "self" and feel comfortable in taking risks and challenging your existing knowledge and experiences. If you approach everything with an open mind where new knowledge can be constructed with those you work with, you are more likely to continuous grow and co-evolve with the district and their change process. A "learner" will see her-/himself on the inside of the process with stakeholders. If you are the "learned," then you see yourself more as an expert on the outside of the process and distanced from the stakeholders as they struggle through the difficult challenges of systemic change. This is a more controlling or directing role and often undermines the ownership of the change process as well as leaves the school district and community dependent on you as an expert. Again, your openness and receptivity to personal change has direct implications for how you respond to the readiness assessment. Given your orientation, you may not view certain capabilities as important for you, only for those you work with.
h. Embrace Process

How comfortable are you in working with process that is time intensive, often frustrating and emotional, and challenging on all levels? Are you a product or task-oriented person who has little patience with groups and the building of relationships? How comfortable are you with engaging in your own self-change and growth process?

One thing is certain, systemic change is about process. You will deal with many different processes over long periods of time and there is no way around it if you are serious about facilitating systemic change. This type of change requires processing on a personal level with yourself and well as with others in the district, and with various groups that are essential to the process. Whether it is systems thinking, dialogue and design conversation, team building, communication, or decision making and conflict resolution, process is at the forefront of all activities. Being a task or product-oriented person will pose definite problems and you must decide whether you are willing to change your mindsets and way of working with people to one of being a process guide. This poses big challenges for those who have rigid mindsets about change and how it should be handled. But systemic change begins first with you as the facilitator and your willingness to learn change internally before attempting to guide change of a school district and community. Your orientation to process can directly bias your participation in the assessment process. If you place low value on process, engaging in a readiness assessment is in danger from the start.

i. Transcendence

How willing are you to embrace the need to step out of your current mindsets and mental models about schools and change? Can you suspend your own assumptions while undertaking the readiness self-assessment? Can you manage your own personal psychological transitions?

Engaging in a facilitator readiness self-assessment will first require that you challenge certain existing mindsets concerning your role in change, how schools should change, and what the future for schools is. You will need to negotiate beyond existing political assumptions, theoretical commitments, and personal psychological needs. As you assess your various "Capabilities," there will be a need to transcend current understandings and beliefs in an effort to provide an honest and authentic representation of your strengths and weaknesses related to facilitation. This means old mindsets of consultation and rigid models of change must be identified and then set aside in order to provide a safe space for the self-assessment. Also, self-assessment is a new process for many people and the tendency to self-identify with some of the listed "Capabilities" may be very strong or controlled by existing mindsets and past experiences that are often governed by self-deception of your abilities. Suspending your assumptions and judgments is an important part of moving to a neutral ground during the self-assessment process.
Activity 1.2
Enhance Your Capabilities
As a Facilitator

When and Why To Use This Activity

Who conducts this activity. The facilitator.

Intent. The intent of this activity is for you to design, develop and implement your program for building your capabilities as a facilitator. Another intent is create an awareness of how important continuous assessment of readiness is, and at the same time understanding that your readiness as a facilitator is a continual learning process integral to the success of the systemic change process.

Context. Having assessed your readiness as a facilitator (Activity 1.1), you conduct this activity. When you have reached a sufficient level of readiness, you should initiate or redefine your relationship with a school district (Event 2)—initiate it if you are new to the district (school system and community) and redefine it if you have been in the district for some time. It is followed by deciding whether or not to undertake a change effort with them (Activity 3.1).

Synopsis. In this activity you develop a professional development program based on the needs identified in the readiness assessment process (Activity 1.1). You initiate this program before entering into a formal relationship with a school district, and you continue the program, periodically reassessing your readiness and redesigning the development program, throughout the systemic change process. This is a time-intensive process and will require a strong commitment on your part. Your growth and learning must be understood as redesigning yourself. The key is to see yourself as a facilitator-learner, and not as the expert who already knows everything. From this perspective you will grow and co-evolve with the stakeholders and the system as they change. Others who enter into a facilitating or assisting role should also engage in this activity.

Rationale. If you skip this activity, your lack of readiness will directly impact your ability to facilitate the systemic change process. And this will, in turn, impact the school district. Facilitating others, especially a diverse body of stakeholders, in a complex change process requires a person who has the process skills and knowledge to help these people move to a shared vision. It also requires a person who is willing to continuously learn and grow in harmony with the district as it changes and evolves. Redesigning yourself as a process guide is critical to the success of a systemic change effort.

Prerequisites. Activity 1.1 and a careful review of Unit I.

Calendar Time. A half day to develop your professional development program, and continuous from then on.
Goals

To design and develop your professional development program, in preparation for your work with a district (school system and community).

To implement your professional development program.

To decide when you are prepared to facilitate systemic change.

To reassess your readiness periodically and revise your Readiness Profile.

Process

This process is designed for you as the lead facilitator and for those who might serve in a co-facilitation role in the systemic change process. This could be persons internal to the school district and community who take an active role, or it could be external agents from outside the district or community. Keep in mind that the professional development program is not a one-time event, but a continuous professional-development and self-renewal process.

1. Identify the urgency of capabilities to develop, and create a schedule.

Review your Facilitator Readiness Profile from Activity 1.1 and determine those specific capabilities that you should develop prior to working with a school district, as opposed to ones you can work on during your work with a school district. Also, determine when each of the remaining competencies will be needed. It may be helpful to review the "Overview of the Change Process," which outlines the discrete and continuous events and to briefly review each event in this guidebook to determine when specific competencies are first required. Some may be entirely new skills, understandings, and beliefs, whereas others may merely require additional development. Arrange the areas into a tentative schedule for development.

   Criteria for prioritizing the capabilities
   The order in which they are required by the discrete events.
   The order of highest priority first.

   (Time: 2-6 hours)

   (Materials and resources: Personal work space, note pad or word processor, Facilitator Readiness Profile)

2. Identify resources for developing each capability.

For each subcategory that requires development, review the "Resources" listed in this activity (see below) to determine which ones you should use when. You may find many of these resources in your local library or in a nearby university library, or you can order them at a book store. You should also explore other professional development resources, such as
people or programs (workshops or courses) in nearby community colleges, universities, or other organizations, to help you develop the capabilities. You may want to contact us about workshops we offer. You may find it useful to visit with someone who is an experienced process facilitator to seek her/his assistance in identifying resources. You may want to begin to consider how much in the way of time and resources it will take to develop each capability you listed in #2 above. Cross-reference this information with your tentative schedule (from #2 above).

(Time: 2 half days)

(Materials and resources: Personal work space, note pad or word processor, *Facilitator Readiness Profile*, copying, professional development resources, and possibly an experienced process facilitator)

3. **Create a preliminary professional development program.**

   Synthesize your information and tentative schedule into a preliminary program for professional development. Identify a time line which enables you to acquire those capabilities you need prior to initiating a project, and set a long-term time line for the remaining capabilities. Be careful to allow sufficient time for assimilating and integrating the conceptual and process skills and knowledge you need.

   You should not begin your relationship with a district until you have fully developed the capabilities you identified as important. This may take a few weeks or even months, depending on your readiness. Don't be impatient to get started with the facilitation. Being prepared will prevent you from experiencing frustration or, even worse, finding yourself having to leave the relationship with the school district. You may find it useful to visit with someone who is an experienced process facilitator to seek their assistance or critique of your program.

   (Time: 1-2 half days)

   (Materials and resources: Personal work space, note pad or word processor, copying, and possibly an experienced process facilitator)

4. **Refine your preliminary program.**

   Refine your preliminary professional development program by reviewing your *Facilitator Readiness Profile*, the "Resources," and your time commitments one final time. Establish a periodic self-assessment schedule as part of your professional development program. Also, plan to continuously monitor and revise your program to keep them in alignment with the needs of the school district's systemic change process.

   (Time: 2-4 hours)

   (Materials and resources: Personal work space, word processor, preliminary program)

5. **Initiate and evaluate your professional development program.**
Carry out all the parts of your program that should be done prior to working with a school district, and continue with your program after you begin working with a school district. Periodically reassess your capabilities and update your readiness profile.

Also, continuously reflect on, evaluate, and revise your program as you proceed.

6. Decide when to begin working with a school district.

When you have completed all parts of your program that should be done prior to working with a school district, proceed to Event 2 to establish or redefine your relationship with a school district. You could start doing Step 1 of Event 2 before you reach that point, but we advise strongly against proceeding to Step 2 until you are there.

Potential Problems with the Process

The following are some problems you may anticipate in trying to develop a professional development program:

• It may seem that some of the specific capabilities identified in your readiness assessment hold little value to you and therefore you may elect to dismiss these in favor of expediency or due your lack of understanding and experience with how these capabilities serve the facilitator in a systemic change process.

• It may be difficult to get access to resources related to specific capabilities.

• Capability building is often time intensive and places additional burdens on an already busy schedule.

In very few instances will you be able to move forward without some understanding of the capabilities we have identified, but you already have some skill and knowledge that requires additional development while there are other capability areas which will demand that you develop entirely new skills and knowledge.
Resources

For each capability identified as needing further development in your professional development plan, you may want to consider the following resources. They are suggested based on our experience and certainly do not cover all the possibilities. Additional resources may be found in a local library, university, or other type of professional growth and development opportunity. Many of the resources are listed under more than one capability. In most instances, where possible, we have listed resources that prove useful across many areas and which demonstrate the interrelated and interdependent nature of many facilitator skills and knowledge. Please feel free to add to the list other sources appropriate to each capability. We would appreciate hearing which resources you find most helpful.

The asterisked items below are the ones we believe are foundational and most appropriate to begin with.

A. Systems thinking and practice

Readings


Videos


B. Educational system design

Readings


C. Language

Readings


Video


D. Conversation

Readings


**Video**


**E. Evaluation and critical inquiry**

**Readings**


**F. Suspend biases (deep underlying assumptions and judgments)**

**Readings**


**Video**

**G. Reflection—reflective practice**

**Readings**


**H. Reflexivity**

**Books**


**I. Disclosure**

**Books**


J. Global Consciousness

Books


Videos

* Barker, J. *The Power of Vision* and *The Business of Paradigms* videos from the "Discovering the Future" series from ChartHouse Learning Corp.


K. Self-renewal

Readings


Videos


L. Community
Readings


Videos


M. Context (Socio-cultural dynamics)

Readings


**Videos**


**N. Managing Change**

**Readings**


**Video**


**O. Leadership**

**Readings**


Activity 1.2

Build YourCapabilities

Video


P. Learning Organization (individual, team or group, and organizational learning)

Readings


Video

Understandings

Given the importance of developing your capabilities as a facilitator, we offer the following suggestions for specific understandings you may find helpful to cultivate. Again, please do not feel you have to use these understandings, and we hope you will identify other understandings you think are important. We encourage you to carefully consider why you are accepting, rejecting, modifying, or adding each understanding.

A. Developing capabilities
   What kinds of conceptual knowledge and process knowledge (including mindsets, skills, and attitudes) are most important to develop?

B. The need for capabilities as a systemic change facilitator
   Continue to foster the understandings begun in Activity 1.1.
   Continue to foster the capabilities essential to your readiness as a process facilitator for systemic change.

C. The nature of systemic change facilitation
   Continue to foster the capabilities essential to your readiness as a process facilitation for systemic change.