
VA Servant Leadership



360-Degree Assessment

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VA Defining
HEALTH CARE EXCELLENCE
in the 21st Century

VHA National Center for
NCOD
Organization Development

Introduction to Servant Leadership

Servant Leadership is a philosophy and practice that emphasizes caring, authenticity, and putting Veterans and employees ahead of other goals. Servant Leaders strive to meet both organizational objectives and the aspirations of individual employees by encouraging their growth and development to their highest potential. Robert Greenleaf (1970), an early contributor to the field of Servant Leadership, defines the Servant Leader as one who is servant first and leader second. He posits that the best test of a Servant Leader is the following: “do those served grow as persons; are they healthier, freer, more autonomous and more likely themselves to become servants?”. Greenleaf (1977) conceptualized Servant Leadership as a way of life, rather than a management technique, distinguished by a primary motivation to serve (*what the servant leader does*) and self-construction (*who the servant leader is*).

Researchers have demonstrated that Servant Leaders get results while promoting a positive work environment that values teams and employee growth. Studies have tied Servant Leadership to increased organizational citizenship behaviors of employees, such as altruism, conscientiousness, and courtesy (Erhart, 2004), and improvements in communication and trust (Liden, 2011). Servant Leadership stresses the importance of nurturing followers, which encourages them to be more creative, engage in more helping behaviors, and improves their well-being (Parris & Peachey, 2013). In addition, and consistent with VA’s emphasis on the importance of working in teams, research has shown Servant Leadership increases collaboration between team members and improves team effectiveness (Parris & Peachey, 2013). In a comparison of “Good to Great” companies with servant-led companies between 1995 and 2005, it was found that Fortune 500 companies experienced a 10.8% return on investment (ROI), “Good to Great” companies a 17.5% ROI, and servant-led companies a 24.5% ROI (Sipe & Frick, 2009).

Servant Leadership is sometimes mistaken for indecisive or passive leadership. In reality, it requires strength of self-mastery, strength of action and strength of relationships. Servant Leaders operate from courage, collaboration, integrity, and a strong internal compass. They accomplish measurable results by helping staff grow into informed, thinking, caring, and creative people who, in turn, are committed to serving. Since Servant Leadership is not solely dependent upon positional authority, but also on moral authority (the ability to inspire followership), it is not limited to those at upper levels of organizational hierarchy. An important principle of Servant Leadership is that *we’re all leaders, all of the time*.

Servant Leadership is not a project or a program, but an organizationally healthy way of doing business. It is contagious and has a transforming influence (Farling, 1999). It cultivates capabilities, commitment and a personal connection to VA’s mission. Servant Leadership is a platform for transformation: a foundation from which engaged employees can deliver Veteran Centered service.

The VA Servant Leadership 360 Assessment

The SL 360 assessment is designed to provide you with an assessment of yourself as a Servant Leader as well as behaviorally-based, actionable information that can be used to form a thoughtful plan to further your Servant Leader goals.

This assessment is based on an adaptation of James Sipe and Donald Frick's model of Servant Leadership, outlined in *The Seven Pillars of Servant Leadership* (2009). Your assessment results will be organized by each pillar. Below is a list of the seven pillars and the sub-competencies that comprise each.

1. Person of Character

- a. Maintains Integrity - Acts in a way that is consistent with what he/she says and thinks; is considered ethical, trustworthy and credible; and values maintaining his/her integrity more than profits or personal gain.
- b. Demonstrates Humility - Keeps his/her talent and accomplishments in perspective, remains other-focused, acknowledges mistakes, and asks for help when needed.
- c. Engages in Value Driven Behavior - Possesses clear personal core values, and uses them to guide decisions and actions.

2. Puts People First

- a. Service Driven - Helps others even when he/she is not expected to; focuses on service to all stakeholders, including internal and external customers; and goes "above and beyond" to ensure others are provided the best possible service.
- b. Mentor Minded - Provides opportunity and an environment for employee growth; encourages employees to assume responsibility for their growth; and is a compassionate and wise partner in growth, while meeting employees where they are.
- c. Shows Care and Concern - Acts in ways that support the well-being and autonomy of employees with the intention of putting others' needs before his/her own.

3. Skilled Communicator

- a. Practices Empathetic Listening - Is fully present with employees, which allows for a keen awareness of their thoughts, feelings and needs, and explicitly expresses to them a deep and caring understanding of their experiences.
- b. Invites and Delivers Feedback - Asks for and acts upon feedback without defensiveness, and delivers difficult feedback when necessary in a way that is honest, respectful, and growth enhancing.
- c. Communicates Persuasively - Guides employees to come to realizations and gain insights on their own without direct, coercive or manipulative strategies; motivates others by linking content of communication to meaningful experiences of the listener.

4. Compassionate Collaborator

- a. Builds Teams and Communities - Encourages a culture of community that values mutual helping relationships, civility, and respect.
- b. Creates Psychological Safety - Creates a safe environment in which honest conversations are welcomed without fear of reprisal, employees are encouraged to come up with new ways of doing things, and mistakes are not held against them.
- c. First Among Equals - Promotes inclusiveness, believes employees at every level add value to the organization, and de-emphasizes hierarchy.



5. Foresight

- a. Visionary - Develops and shares a compelling long-term vision, which includes employee input and connects to employees' deepest values.
- b. Anticipates Consequences - Demonstrates a good understanding of what is going to happen in the future based on current information, and has a high level of intuitive insight about the way the past and present connect to the future.
- c. Takes Courageous, Decisive Action - Is willing to take personal risk in the face of pressure or opposition to make the right decision for the organization; considers all aspects of the situation, including history, current data, and probable impact on the future.

6. Systems Thinker

- a. Comfortable with Complexity - Seeks to understand as deeply as possible the interconnectedness of relationships within the larger system (between people, processes, structures, belief systems), is comfortable with this complexity, and keeps this in mind when making leadership decisions.
- b. Leads Change Effectively - Responds to changes faced by the organization in a flexible and effective manner, and demonstrates understanding of employees' reactions when faced with changes.
- c. Exercises Stewardship - Considers the greater good when making decisions, including factors beyond the financial impact, immediate organizational goals, and the individuals directly involved, looking to the future impact on both the organization and the community.

7. Moral Authority

- a. Shares Power and Control - Sees every player in the organization as an important part of the enterprise and serves them by teaching, nurturing, listening, and encouraging individuals and teams to take real responsibility at the highest possible levels.
- b. Creates a Culture of Accountability - Sets clear performance standards in line with the organization's mission, and models behaviors consistent with this; employees are a part of setting, achieving, and holding each other accountable to standards of performance.

How to Review Your VA Servant Leadership 360-Degree Report

The results provided in this report are intended to be used as a guide for personal development. You can choose with whom to share the information in this report and how you use the information you gain. The hope is that this information will be used to identify areas of strength, as well as areas for improvement to develop yourself as a Servant Leader. A Personal Development Plan Worksheet and a bibliography are provided at the end of this report to assist in your personal development efforts. If needed, NCOD consultation is available to assist you in processing the information and creating a Personal Development Plan.



Orientation to the Report

Your VA SL360 Report is organized into three sections: 1) Overall Results, 2) Overall Results Summary by Pillar, Sub-competency, and Respondent Group, and 3) Comments Section.

- 1) **Section I: Overall Results:** This section presents a graph of your Overall Averages by Pillar. The Averages include the responses to all items from all respondents (excluding SELF) within each Pillar. This allows you to see where you fall on each of the Pillars.
- 2) **Section II: Overall Results Summary by Pillar, Sub-competency and Respondent Group:** This section presents the Overall Averages from all respondents' ratings (excluding SELF) on each question within each Pillar and Sub-competency. This section also indicates how you and each of your respondent groups rated you on each of the seven Pillars and their sub-competencies.
- 3) **Section III: Comments Section:** This section presents verbatim comments provided by respondents when asked to identify 2 – 3 specific, observable behaviors you could demonstrate to be more aligned with the qualities of a Servant Leader, as well as 2 – 3 specific, observable behaviors in which you are especially effective.

How to Read the Graphs

- **Item** = the item is listed above the graph of responses.
- **Rater** = the rater group represented; Overall represents the average of ALL responses including the SELF ratings.
- **N** = the number of respondents who responded to this item. Note that if an individual skipped the item or selected "Skill Not Observed", they are not included in the total count, which is why this number can vary from item-to-item.
- **Score** = this is the average of all respondents' ratings of that item. Please note that for the PEER and STAFF groups, if there were less than 3 ratings for the item, this column and the associated bar graph will be blank.
- **Scores < 1** = If the score or average you receive for a specific item or items is less than 1, no bar will appear; however, you will see your score to the left.

Rating Scale for the VA SL360 Assessment:

- (1) Strongly Disagree
 - (2) Disagree
 - (3) Neither Agree Nor Disagree
 - (4) Agree
 - (5) Strongly Agree
- *** Skill Not Observed



As you review your report, pay attention to:








- Your own initial reactions:
 - When reviewing the results do you feel defensive? Do you feel hurt?
 - Review results again later to explore legitimate opportunities for improvement
 - Feedback is a gift!
- Your areas of strength and opportunities for improvement:
 - What were your highest scores? Is this in line with what you considered your strengths?
 - What are your lowest scores? Any surprises?
- Large differences in ratings from group to group:
 - Why do groups perceive your performance differently?
 - Is it a result of how you assigned the groups?
 - Examine your functional relationships with each group: do you relate differently? Do they reflect the tasks of the group? Are there any unexplored reasons?
- Disruption in patterns (e.g. a group that consistently scores you higher, scores you markedly lower on some items)
- When the bosses' score is significantly lower than your self-assessment. You may need to either:
 - Improve your competency in that area, or
 - Improve your bosses' awareness of your competency
- When your self-assessment is consistently lower or higher than group ratings:
 - Are you underrating your own skills? Why?
 - Are you overrating your own skills? Remember you're only a Servant Leader if others see you as one. Why might this discrepancy exist?



Section I: Overall Results

How to Read This Section: Each item was scored from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Higher scores on an item or Pillar indicate a favorable rating. The graph below presents your Overall Pillar Average Scores. The Averages include the responses to all items from all respondents within each Pillar, excluding SELF ratings. This allows you to see where you fall on each of the Pillars, and can be used to guide your personal development efforts.

Overall Pillar Average Scores

	N	Score	1	2	3	4	5
Pillar Average Scores							
1: Person of Character	14	3.67					
2: Puts People First	14	3.04					
3: Skilled Communicator	14	3.08					
4: Compassionate Collaborator	14	3.82					
5: Foresight	14	3.17					
6: Systems Thinker	14	4.31					
7: Moral Authority	14	3.72					

Section II: Results Summary by Pillar, Sub-competency, and Respondent

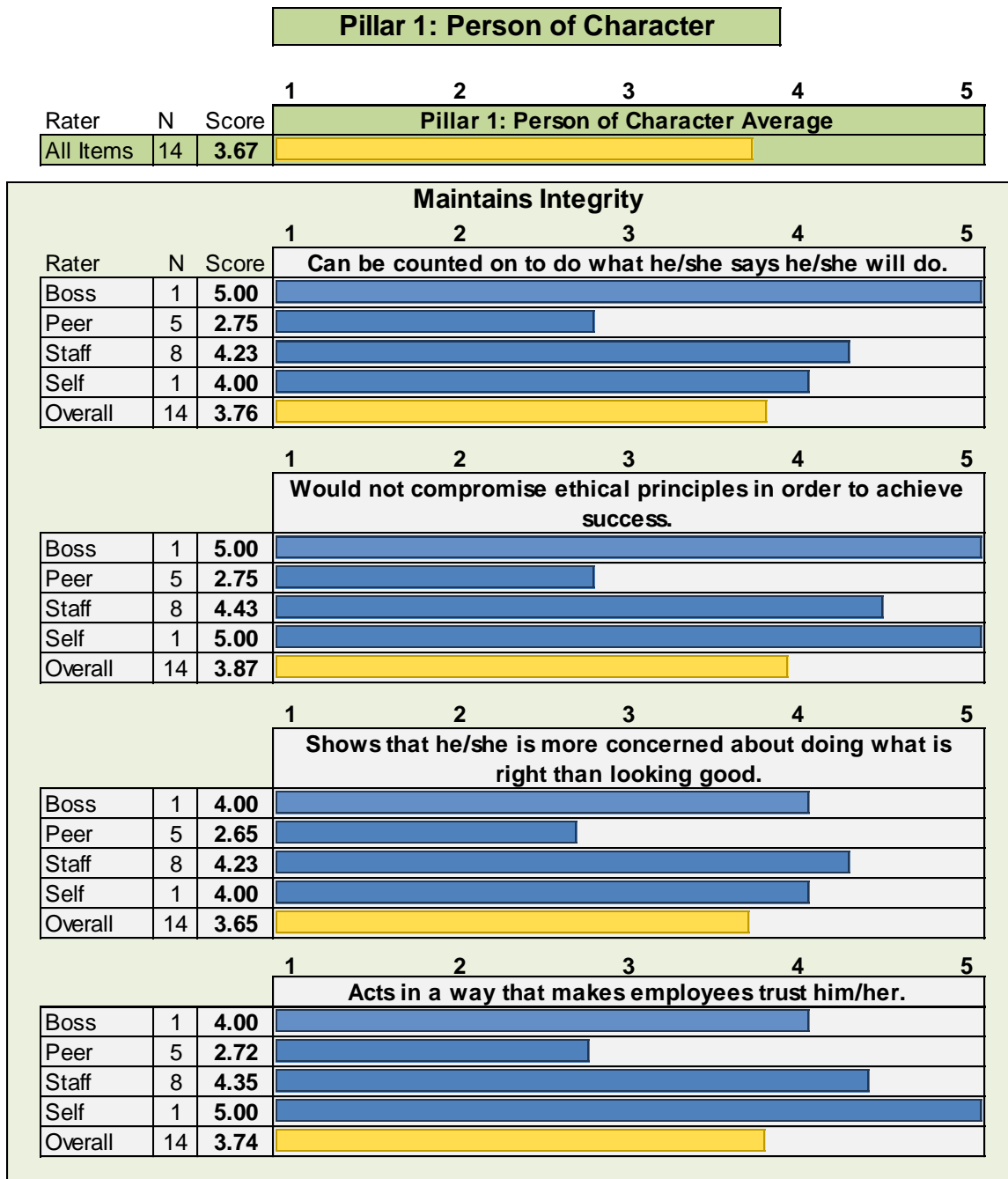
How to Read This Section: This section presents the Overall Averages from all respondents' ratings on each question within each Pillar and Sub-competency. The Averages include the responses to all items from all respondents (excluding SELF) within each Pillar. Average ratings within Peer and Staff Groups are reported when at least 3 respondents within the Peer or Staff Group provided a rating for 3 or more behaviors contributing to the sub-competency. Average ratings within SELF and Boss Groups are reported when there is at least 1 rating within the Group for at least 1 behavior contributing to the Pillar. N represents the number of responses included in that score. The average for all items within the Pillar is located above the individual item scores; note that this average does not include SELF ratings.

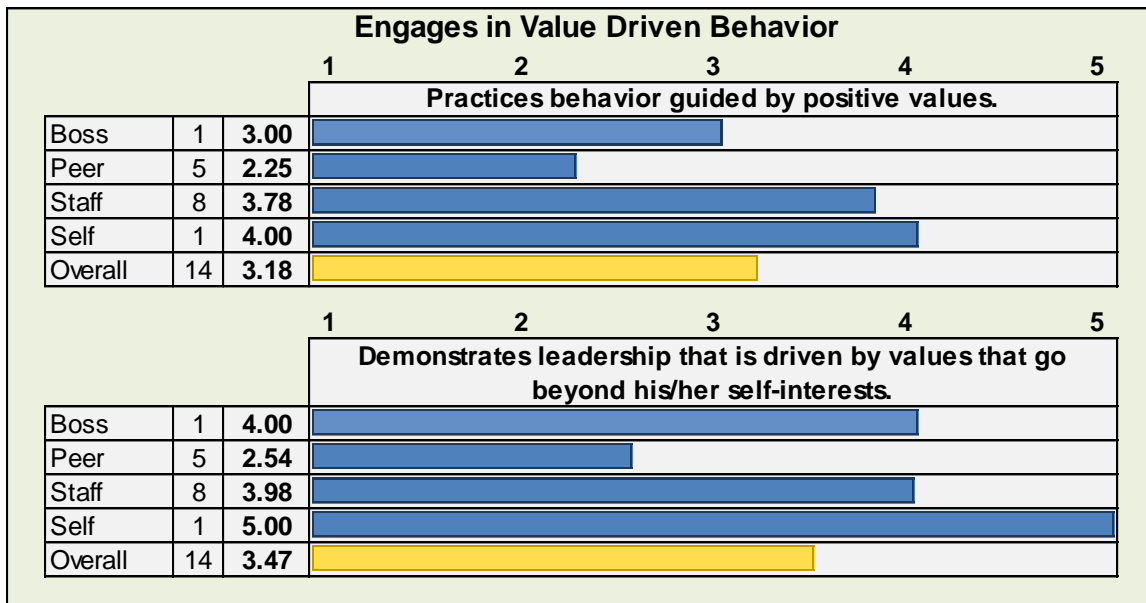
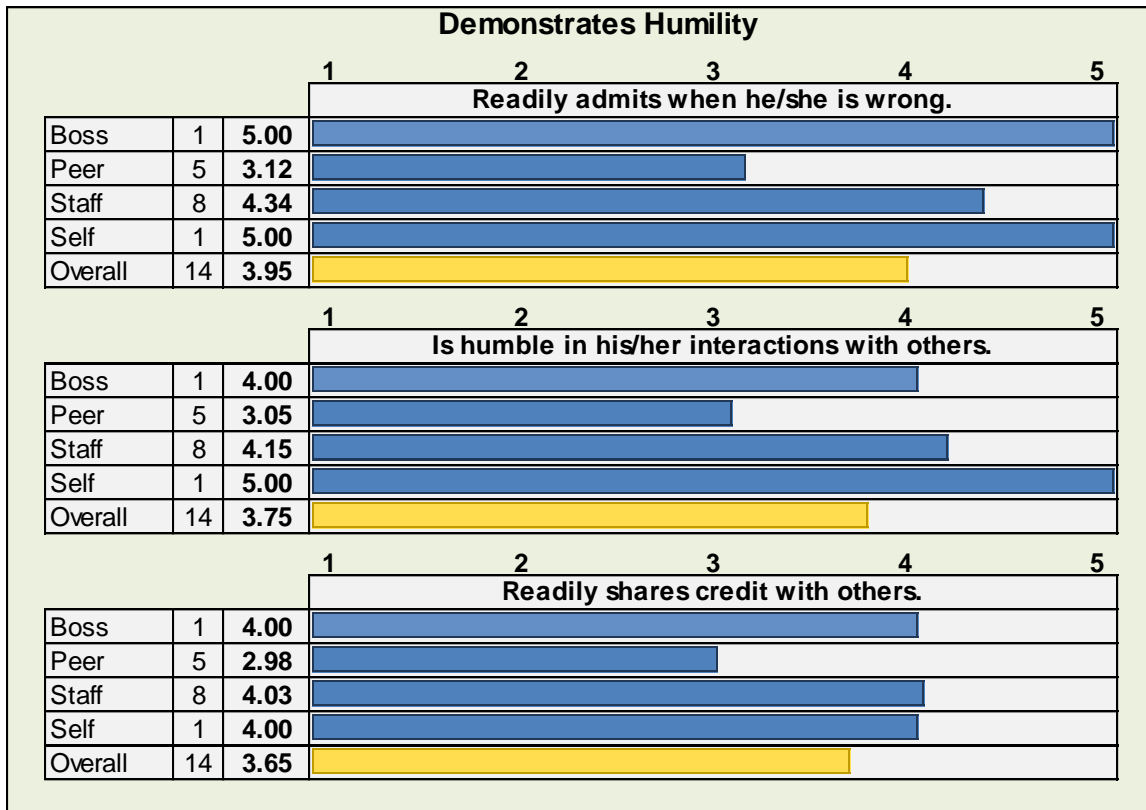


PILLAR 1: PERSON OF CHARACTER

Pillar 1 Includes the Following 3 Sub-competencies:

- **Maintains Integrity:** Acts in a way that is consistent with what they say and think. Is considered ethical, trustworthy and credible. This person values maintaining their integrity more than profits or personal gain.
- **Demonstrates Humility:** Keeps their talent and accomplishments in perspective, remains other-focused, acknowledges mistakes, and asks for help when needed.
- **Engages in Value Driven Behavior:** Possesses clear personal core values, and uses them to guide decisions and actions.






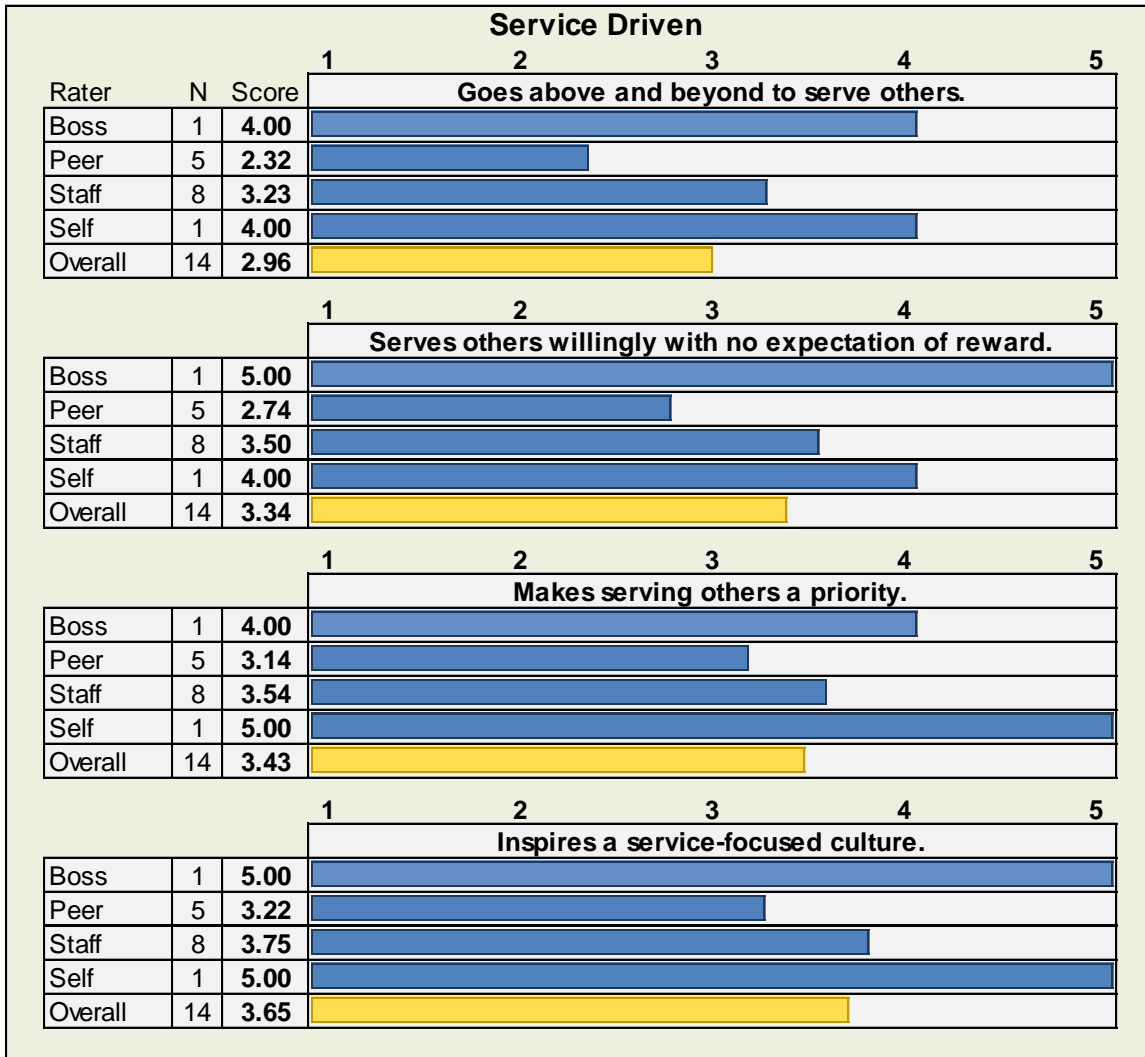
PILLAR 2: PUTS PEOPLE FIRST

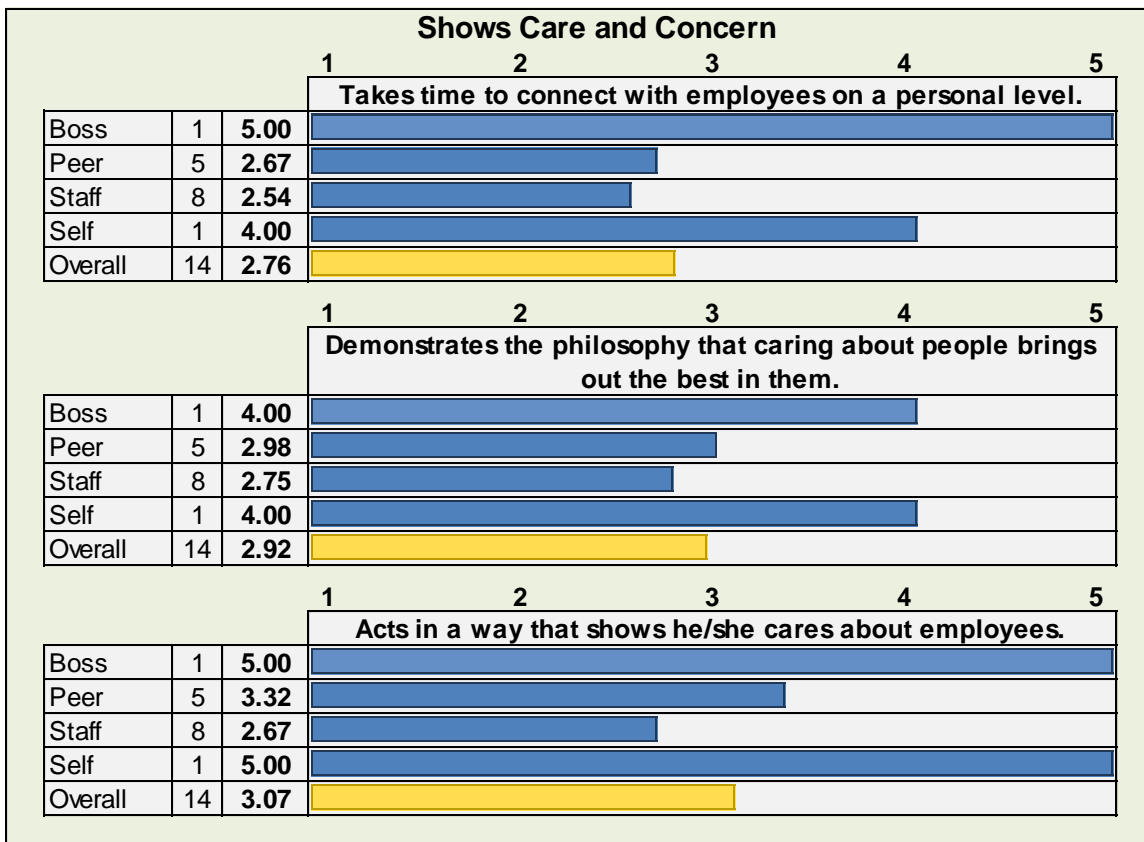
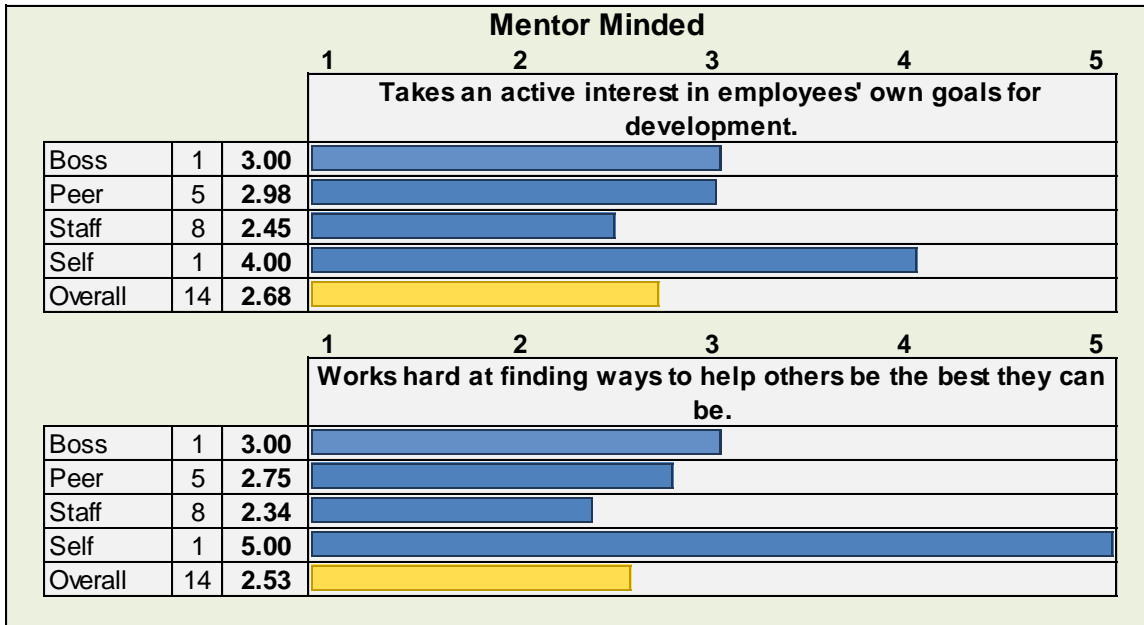
Pillar 2 Includes the Following 3 Sub-competencies:

- **Service Driven:** Helps others even when he/she is not expected to; focuses on service to all stakeholders, including internal and external customers; and goes “above and beyond” to ensure others are provided the best possible service.
- **Mentor Minded:** Provides opportunity and an environment for employee growth; encourages employees to assume responsibility for their growth; and is a compassionate and wise partner in growth, while meeting employees where they are.
- **Shows Care and Concern:** Acts in ways that support the well-being and autonomy of employees with the intention of putting others’ needs before his/her own.

Pillar 2: Puts People First

			1	2	3	4	5
Rater	N	Score	Pillar 2: Puts People First Average				
All Items	14	3.04					





PILLAR 3: SKILLED COMMUNICATOR

Pillar 3 Includes the Following 3 Sub-competencies:

- **Practices Empathetic Listening:** Is fully present with employees, which allows for a keen awareness of their thoughts, feelings and needs, and explicitly expresses to them a deep and caring understanding of their experiences.
- **Invites and Delivers Feedback:** Asks for and acts upon feedback without defensiveness, and delivers difficult feedback when necessary in a way that is honest, respectful, and growth enhancing.
- **Communicates Persuasively:** Guides employees to come to realizations and gain insights on their own without direct, coercive or manipulative strategies; motivates others by linking content of communication to meaningful experiences of the listener.

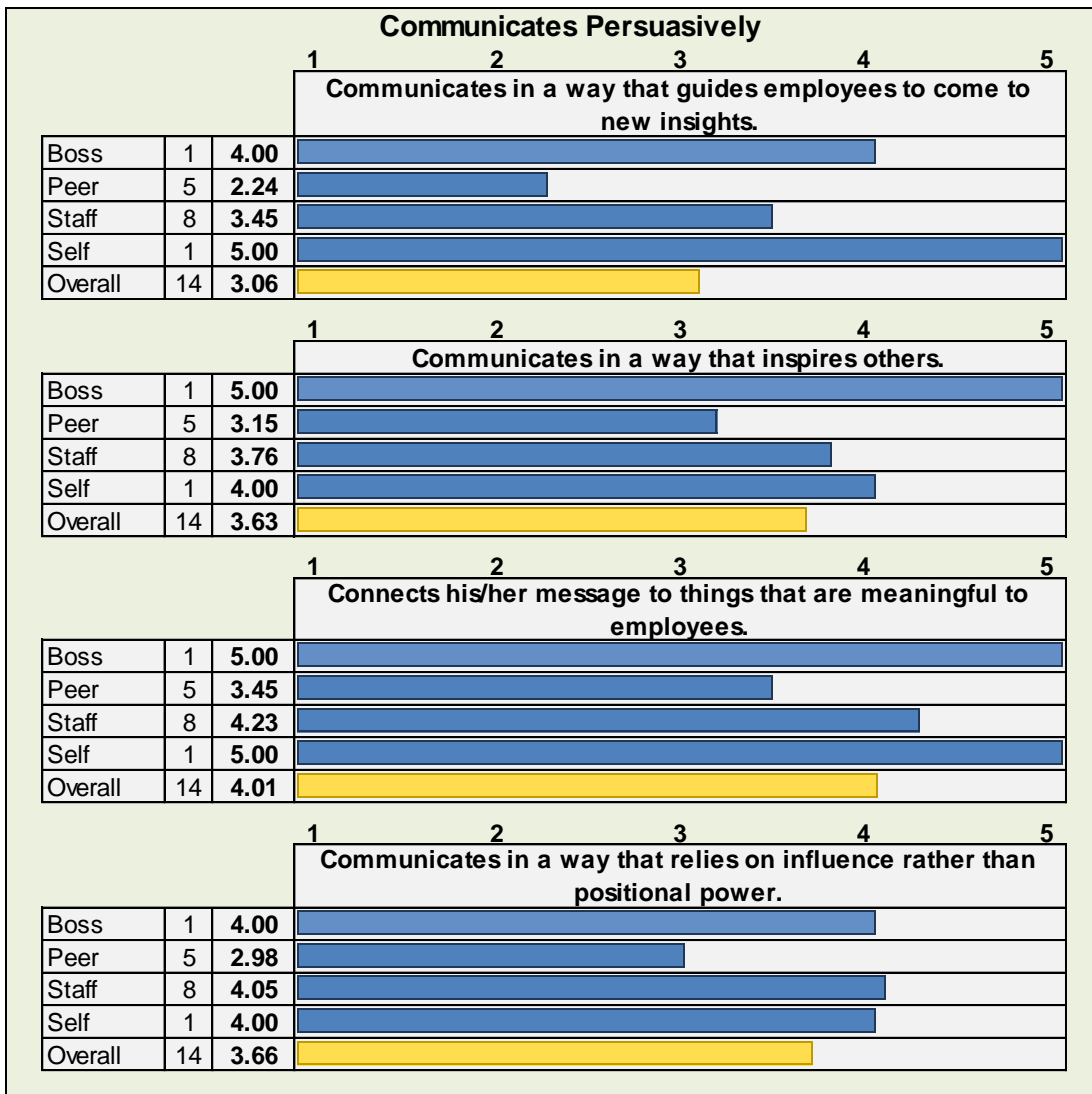
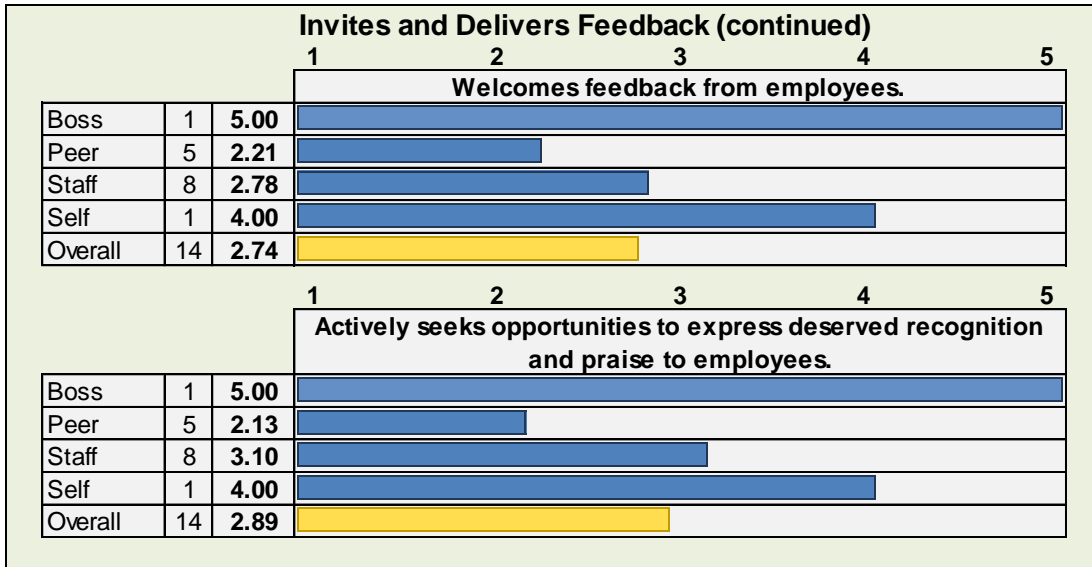
Pillar 3: Skilled Communicator

Rater	N	Score	1	2	3	4	5
Pillar 3: Skilled Communicator Average							
All Items	14	3.08					

Practices Empathetic Listening							
Rater	N	Score	1	2	3	4	5
Listens attentively to others.							
Boss	1	5.00					
Peer	5	2.10					
Staff	8	2.98					
Self	1	5.00					
Overall	14	2.81					
Seeks to understand employees' experience when listening to them.							
Boss	1	4.00					
Peer	5	1.98					
Staff	8	2.65					
Self	1	4.00					
Overall	14	2.51					

Invites and Delivers Feedback							
Rater	N	Score	1	2	3	4	5
Delivers difficult feedback in a way that helps employees grow.							
Boss	1	4.00					
Peer	5	1.94					
Staff	8	2.45					
Self	1	5.00					
Overall	14	2.38					





















PILLAR 4: COMPASSIONATE COLLABORATOR

Pillar 4 Includes the Following 3 Sub-competencies:

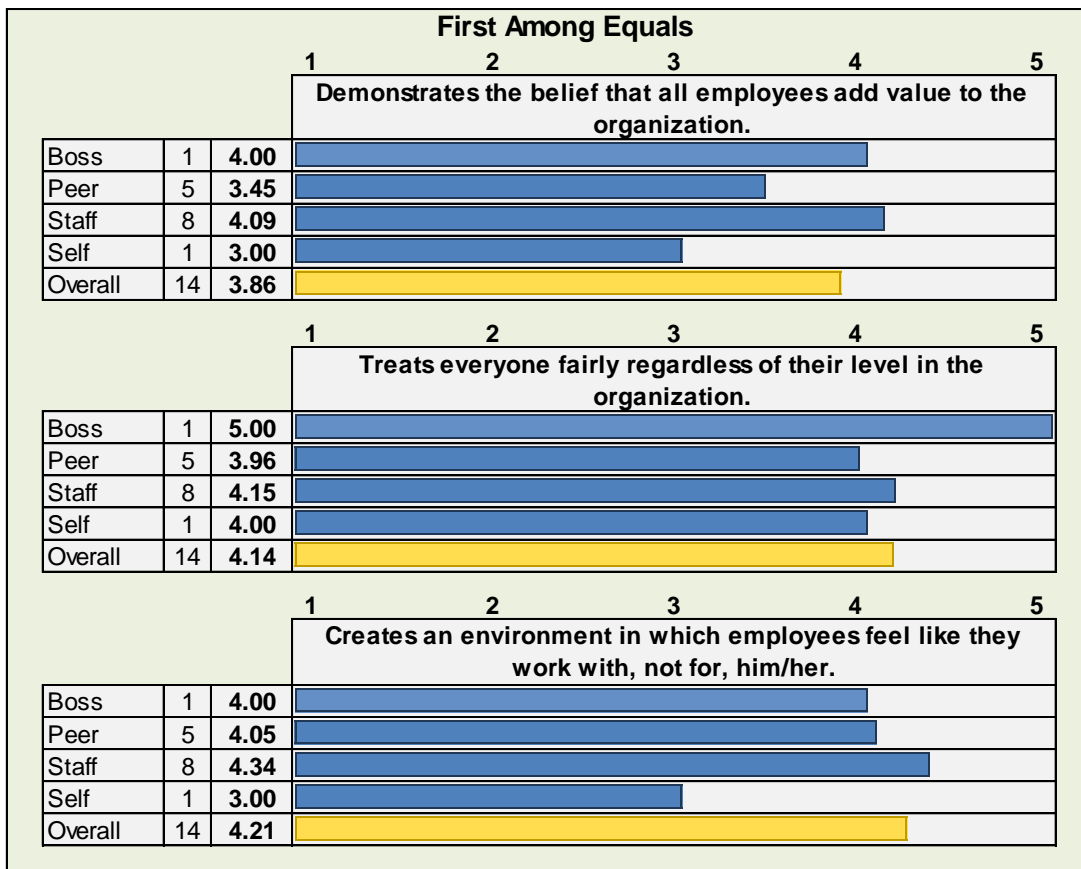
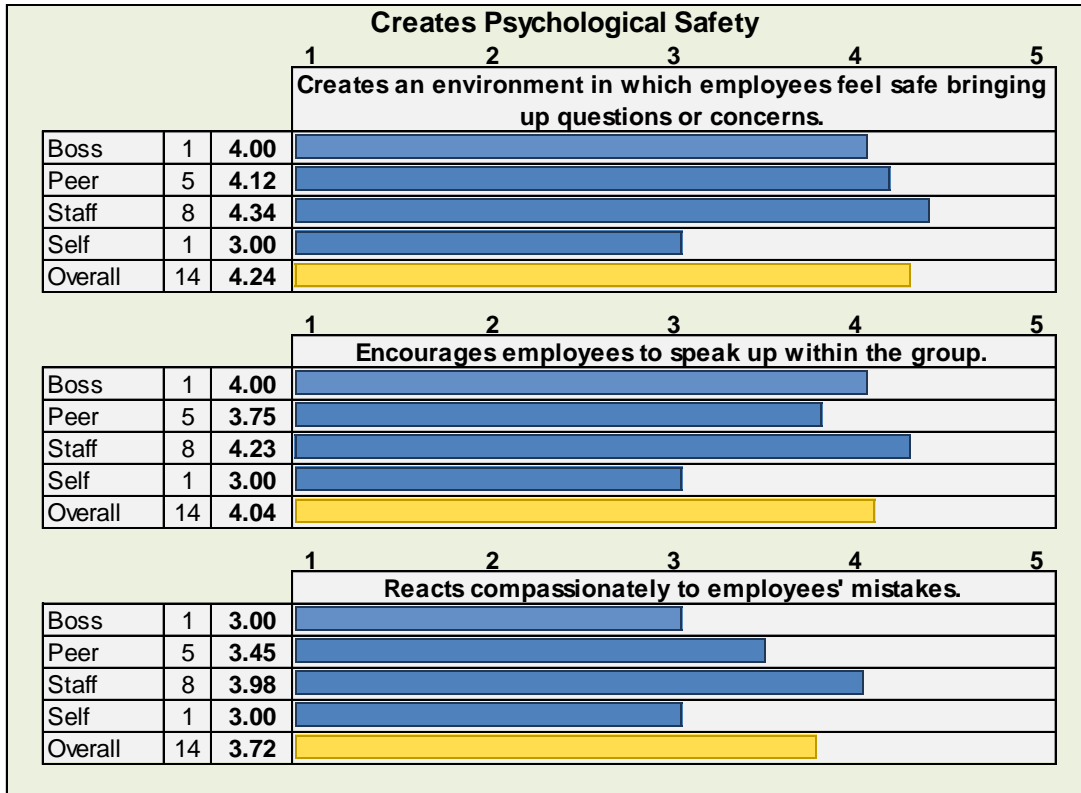
- **Builds Teams and Communities:** Encourages a culture of community that values mutual helping relationships, civility, and respect.
- **Creates Psychological Safety:** Creates a safe environment in which honest conversations are welcomed without fear of reprisal, employees are encouraged to come up with new ways of doing things, and mistakes are not held against them.
- **First Among Equals:** Promotes inclusiveness, believes employees at every level add value to the organization, and de-emphasizes hierarchy.

Pillar 4: Compassionate Collaborator

Rater	N	Score	1	2	3	4	5
Pillar 4: Compassionate Collaborator Average							
All Items	14	3.82					

Builds Teams and Communities							
Rater	N	Score	1	2	3	4	5
Encourages team members to help one another.							
Boss	1	4.00					
Peer	5	2.34					
Staff	8	3.45					
Self	1	2.00					
Overall	14	3.09					
Creates a sense of community at work.							
Boss	1	5.00					
Peer	5	3.15					
Staff	8	3.85					
Self	1	2.00					
Overall	14	3.68					
Develops an environment that supports civility.							
Boss	1	4.00					
Peer	5	3.05					
Staff	8	3.56					
Self	1	3.00					
Overall	14	3.41					

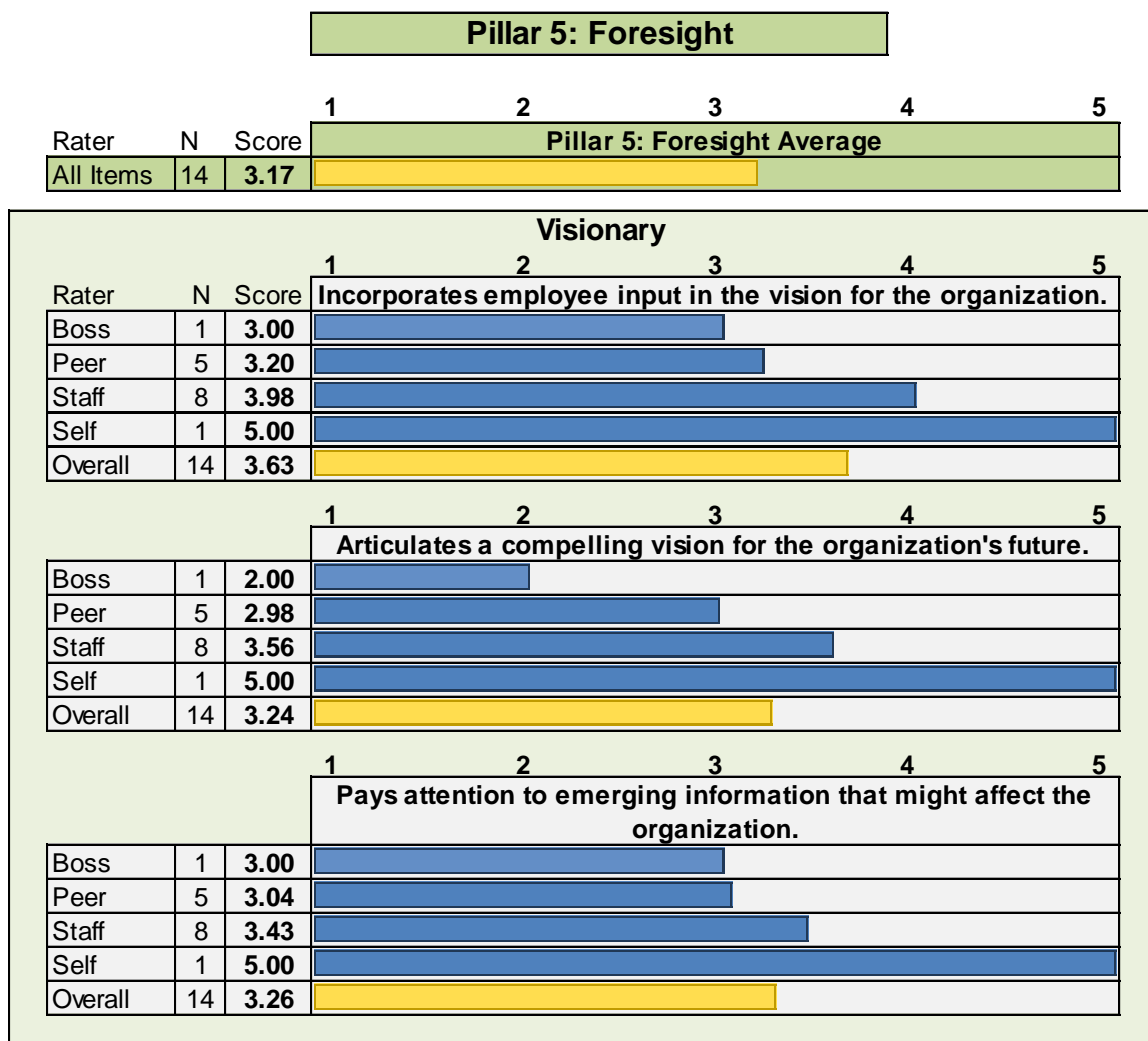


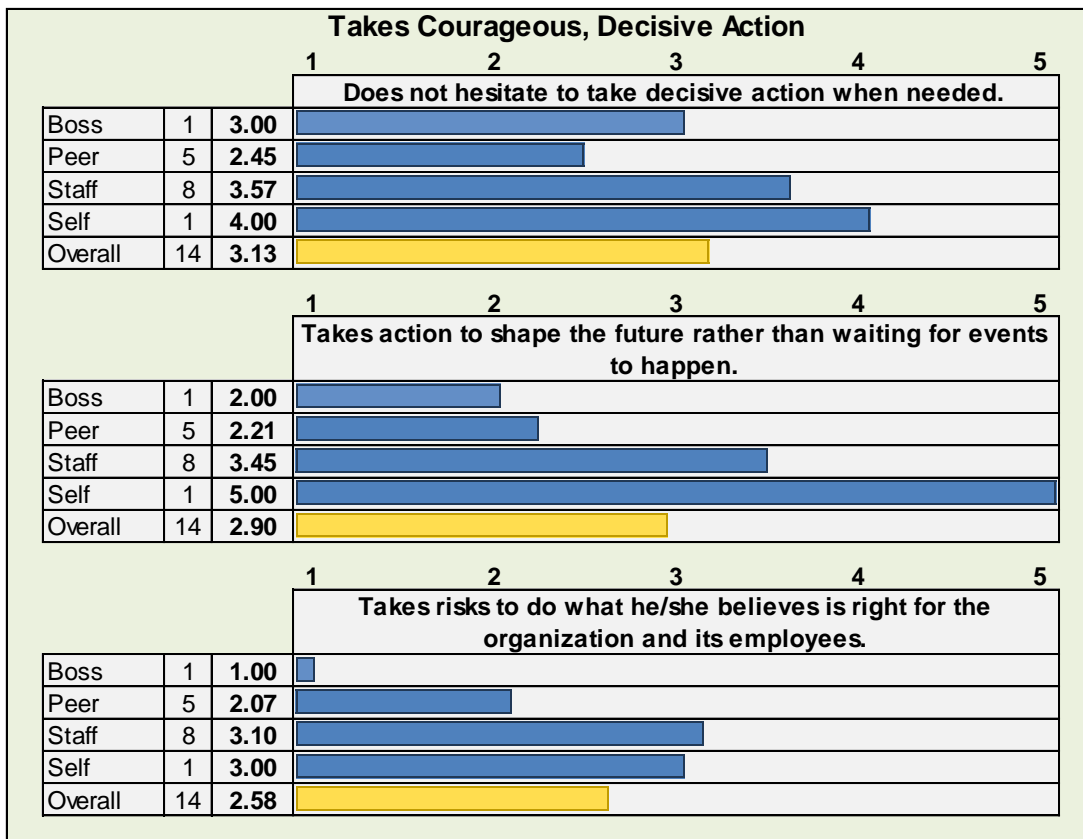
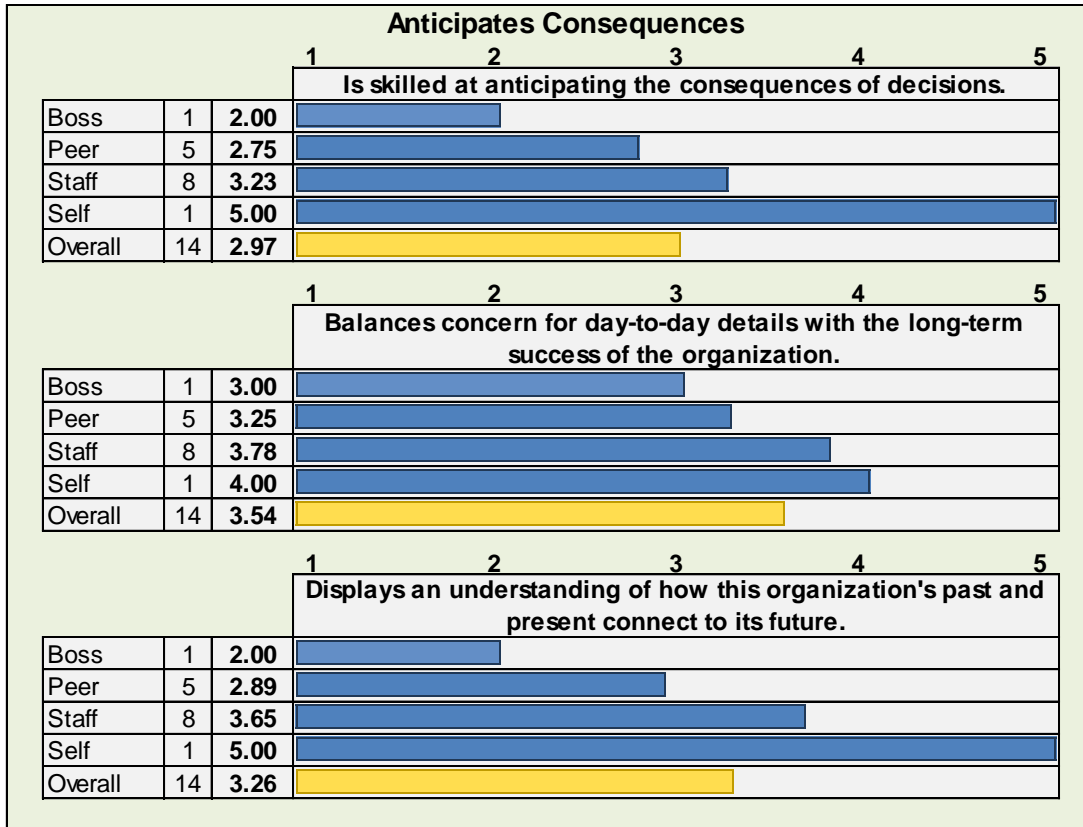


PILLAR 5: FORESIGHT

Pillar 5 Includes the Following 3 Sub-competencies:

- **Visionary:** Develops and shares a compelling long-term vision, which includes employee input and connects to employees' deepest values.
- **Anticipates Consequences:** Demonstrates a good understanding of what is going to happen in the future based on current information, and has a high level of intuitive insight about the way the past and present connect to the future.
- **Takes Courageous, Decisive Action:** Is willing to take personal risk in the face of pressure or opposition to make the right decision for the organization; considers all aspects of the situation, including history, current data, and probable impact on the future.

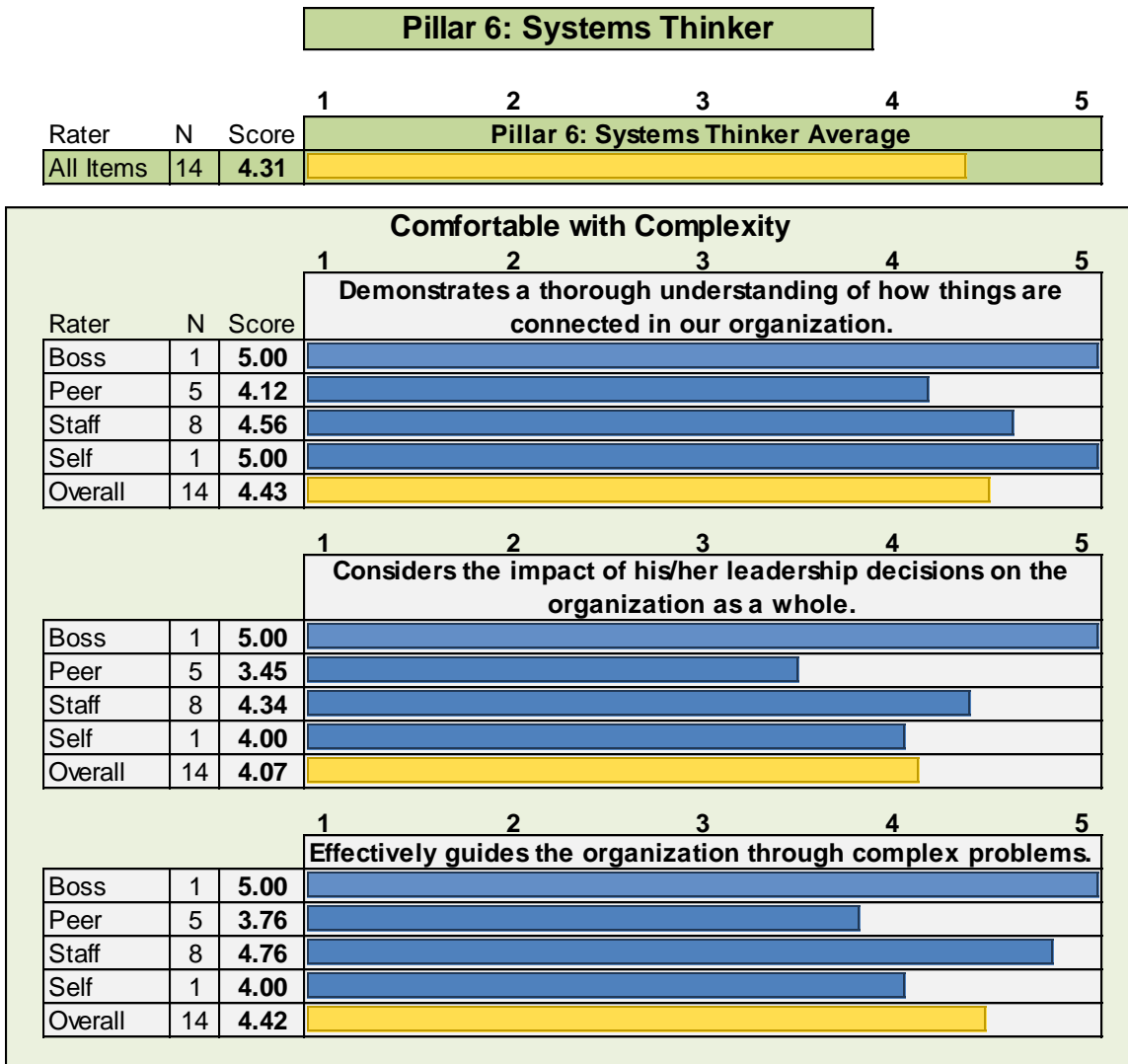


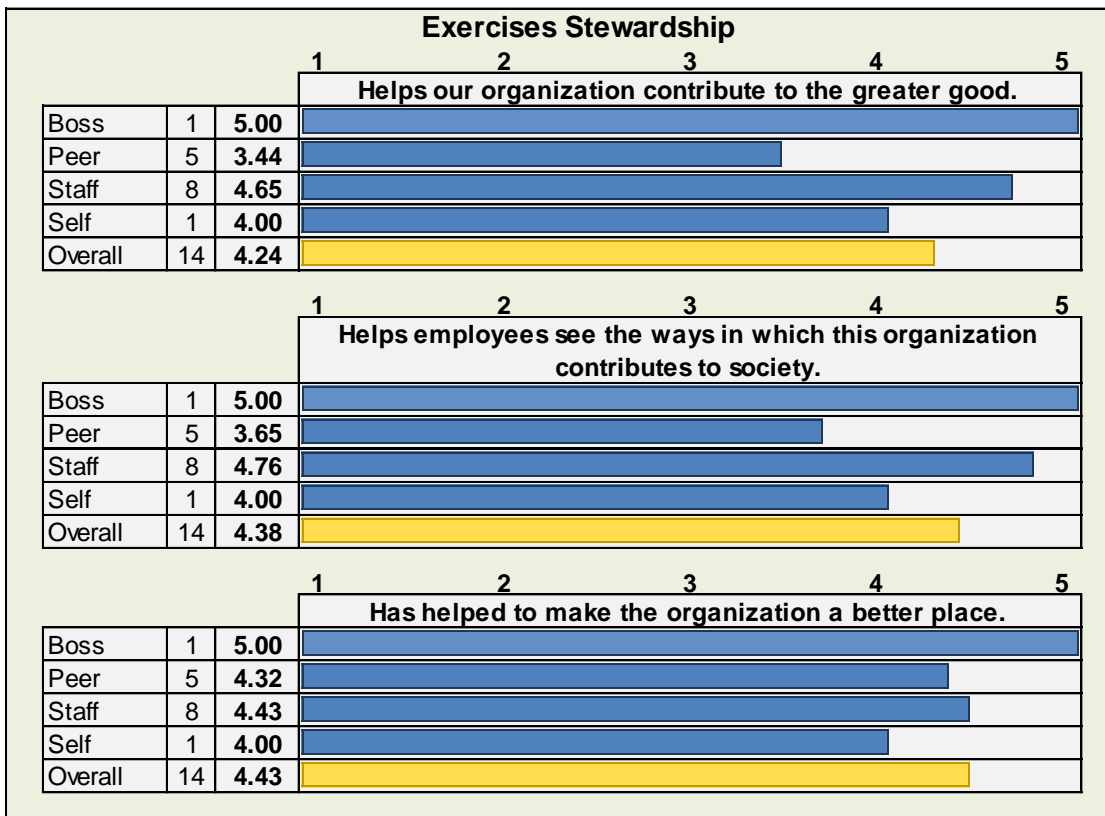
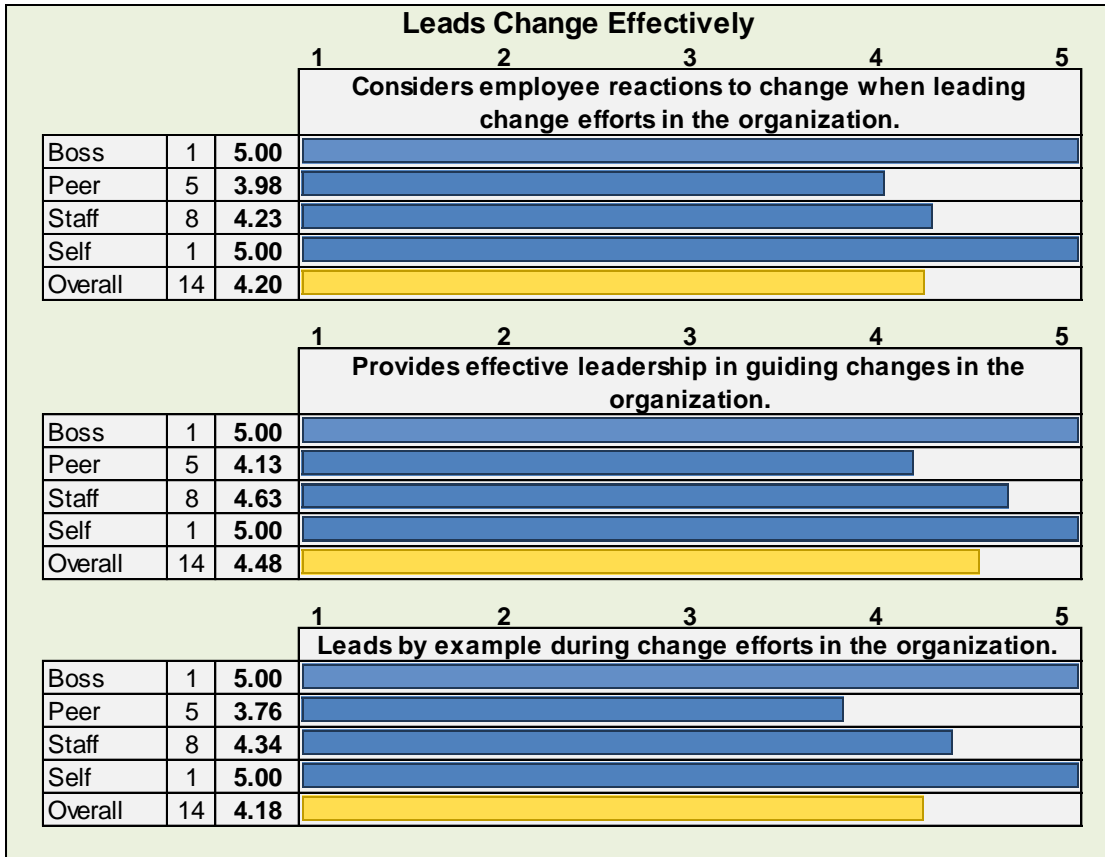


PILLAR 6: SYSTEMS THINKER

Pillar 6 Includes the Following 3 Sub-competencies:

- **Comfortable with Complexity:** Seeks to understand as deeply as possible the interconnectedness of relationships within the larger system (between people, processes, structures, belief systems), is comfortable with this complexity, and keeps this in mind when making leadership decisions.
- **Leads Change Effectively:** Responds to changes faced by the organization in a flexible and effective manner, and demonstrates understanding of employees' reactions when faced with changes.
- **Exercises Stewardship:** Considers the greater good when making decisions, including factors beyond the financial impact, immediate organizational goals, and the individuals directly involved, looking to the future impact on both the organization and the community.

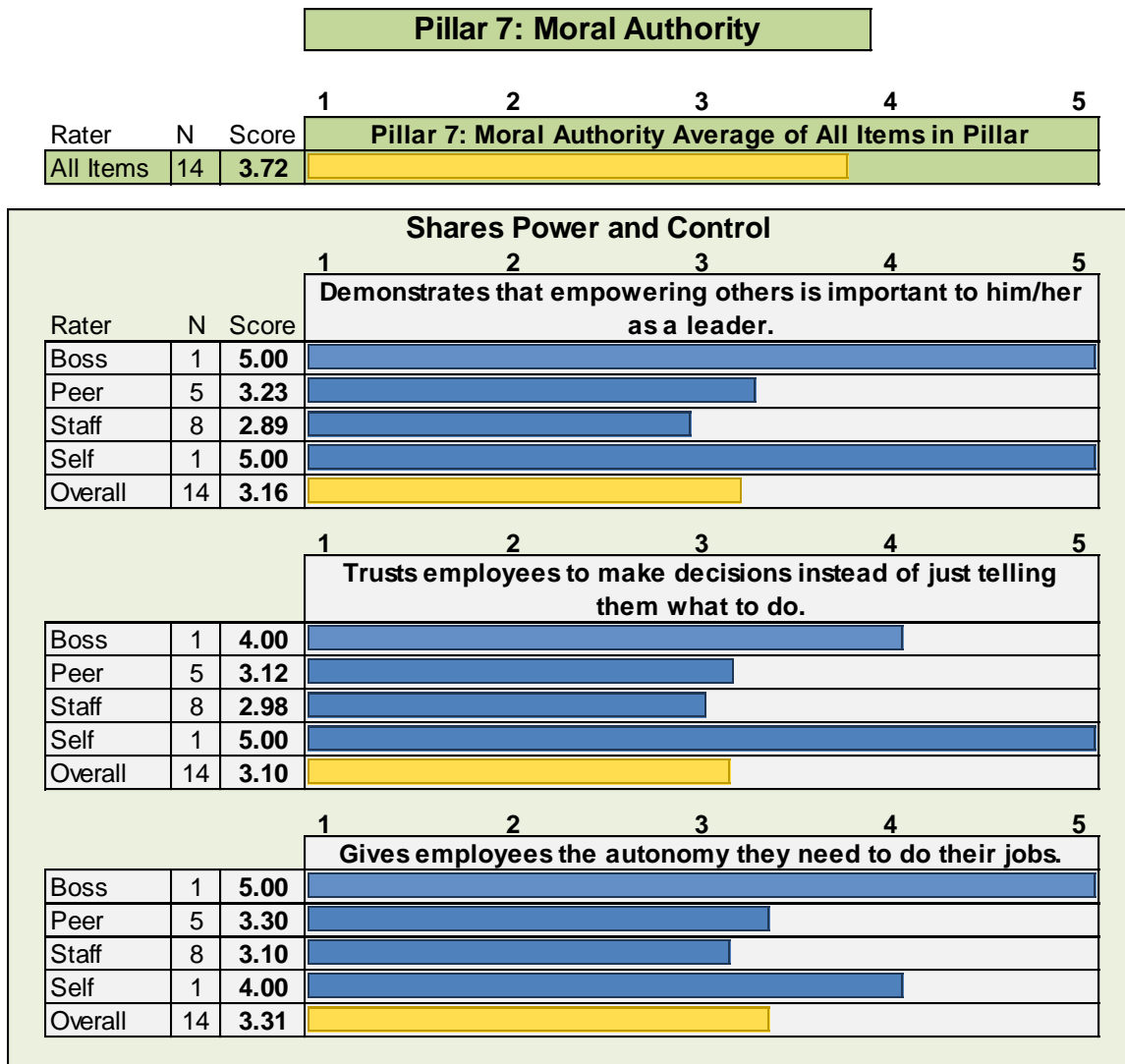


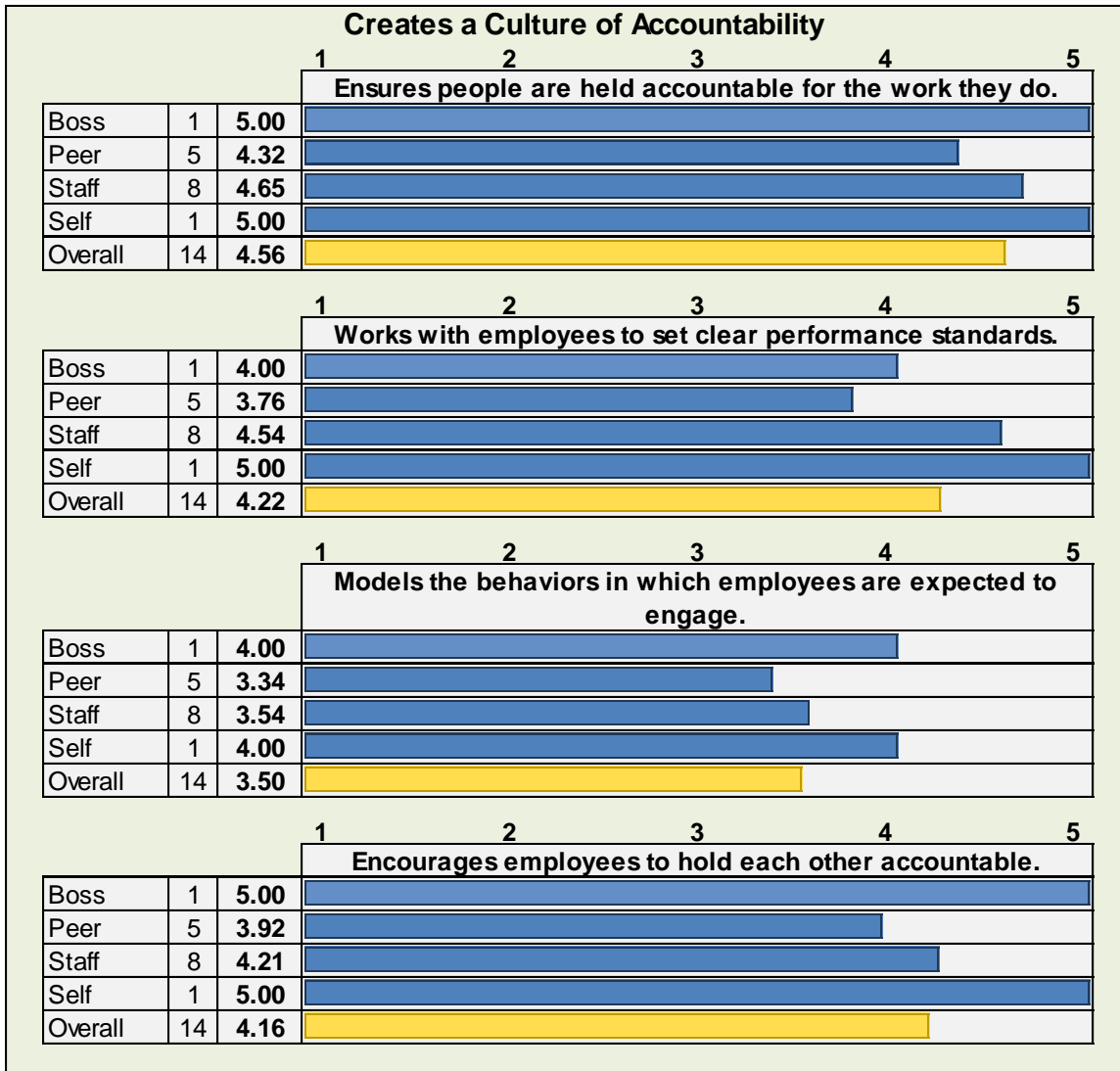


PILLAR 7: MORAL AUTHORITY

Pillar 7 Includes the Following 3 Sub-competencies:

- **Shares Power and Control:** Sees every player in the organization as an important part of the enterprise and serves them by teaching, nurturing, listening, and encouraging individuals and teams to take real responsibility at the highest possible levels.
- **Creates a Culture of Accountability:** Sets clear performance standards in line with the organization's mission, and models behaviors consistent with this; employees are a part of setting, achieving, and holding each other accountable to standards of performance.





Section IV: Respondents' Verbatim Comments

How to Read This Section: This section presents verbatim comments provided by respondents when they were asked to identify 2 – 3 specific, observable behaviors you could demonstrate to be more aligned with the qualities of a Servant Leader, as well as 2 – 3 specific, observable behaviors in which you are especially effective.

Please list two or three specific, observable behaviors this person could do to be more effective in demonstrating Servant Leadership.

Areas for Improvement
1. Can become aloof or withdrawn when focused or stressed.
2. Could focus more on general communication instead of task oriented communications.
3. Could work on teaching, coaching, and mentoring his staff. 4. He struggles with sharing the vision he has for his department with others and getting their buy-in. 5. The area I think he has the most work to do is making decisions and taking action - he seems to get stuck in analysis paralysis - taking in too much information when he just needs to make a decision.
be more compassionate, personable and genuine when communicating to staff. Work on team and moral building.
Building teams and communities; showing care for the participant's coworkers and team; creating psychological safety in work environment.
He doesn't trust us to do the job so he often just does it himself, so it feels like he is micromanaging us; and since he doesn't tell us how we are doing, we don't know what we're doing wrong.
he micromanages and doesn't give us a chance to try new and challenging things; he is always looking at his blackberry and distracted; he also could do a better job letting us know how he thinks we're doing
he never gives us feedback - good or bad and he doesn't ask for any either; he also doesn't talk to us about how we can grow or develop in our roles or careers
I have always struggled with working as a part of a team. I tend to focus on getting the job done, and sometimes it is difficult for me to remember to bring others into the process. I also have a hard time delegating. In addition, I have had a tough time getting my team to work together and get along. I just wish everyone would focus on the work that needs done and less on bickering with their coworkers.
Mr. Lewis is often very busy and stressed, so he doesn't interact with us much. It would be nice if he spent more time socializing with us - getting to know us and for us to get to know him as a person. He should put down the blackberry and pay attention in meetings. I also wish he spent a little time helping us to develop our skills.
Mr. Lewis tends not to delegate as much as he should and seems to have a hard time letting go of control. He should trust his employees more to take on more challenging assignments and allow us to develop.
Needs to work on being a member of the team.
When discussing an issue there needs to be positive issues too.
Needs better communication.
Does not communicate well.
Not really anything to this point. Very effective and supportive leader
nothing
Petie always seems stressed and in a hurry - he never seems to be in the moment or have time to hear about others' opinions or ideas. This shuts conversation down. He is often withdrawn and doesn't seem



Areas for Improvement
to interact with his team much. His team members need more development opportunities, and is his job to help them in that arena.
Petie is a man of high moral integrity. This being the case he sometimes takes critical feedback as a personal attack. He could be more effective if he took this negative feedback as a way to improve.
providing feedback - we never know what he thinks about how we are doing. Give us more freedom to do the work the way we think is best.

Please list two or three specific, observable behaviors at which this person is especially effective in demonstrating Servant Leadership.

Strengths
- empowering subordinates to be decisive and implement change
- supports transition of new personnel into new roles of the organization
1. Is dedicated to the mission and vision of the organization. 2. Effectively leads change efforts.
3. Is very comfortable with complex problems requiring a willingness to be decisive. 4. I can always count on him to get results.
Being fair and honest are very important to me. I strive to create a sense of accountability and integrity in our department. I feel that because I am a hard worker, I can be relied on to get the job done.
he has a better understanding of the organization and the conditions that are impacting it at any given time than anyone else I know - I believe he will help this organization evolve and change to become even better
he is very fair and honest. Although he does a good job of setting expectations and holding us to them, he doesn't do the best job role modeling for us how to work together as a team.
He is very objective and fair. He works hard and never expects something he wouldn't do.
helping our team succeed
His dedication to the work and the organization inspires the team to be successful. He has a vision for what is possible, and it encourages us to work hard to accomplish it.
Mr. Lewis is such a hard worker, no job is beneath him. If we get slammed, he is right there with us working extra hours. His ability to guide the organization through changes is amazing.
Participant continuously shows care and concern for others; creating a culture of accountability. Participant leads change effectively.
Petie can anticipate problems that could be coming and might affect the medical center or his department; if there is a new initiative, he is the person to assign it to - he can help get it done. He can see a future state that others might not see.
Petie has continued his education so that he can begin to understand the complexity of the whole organization and not just the department.
Petie is a man of high moral integrity. He takes his responsibilities as a leader very seriously and personally. He is a hard worker, but would be more effective if he focused on other people more.
seeing future challenges or problems - working hard to accomplish the goals he sets for our department
Very good at delegating.

Additional Resources

Personal Development Plan

Consider using your results to create a personal development plan.

- Think about the ratings of the respondent groups. How consistent are they? Do they all need the same things from you as a Servant Leader? Are there opportunities to tailor your plan to meet diverse needs?
- Don't overreach. Be realistic. Determine which pillars/competencies you want to improve first. Research has found that it is more powerful and impactful to identify an area in which you are already strong and work to further develop and leverage that strength, versus solely focusing on fixing weaknesses. Consider which areas will net the greatest results. Improvements in one competency often spill over into other competencies.
- Commit to specific, measurable actions. Monitor your progress regularly.

Reflect on the following questions when creating your personal development plan.

- Why do I serve?
 - Is service the byproduct or the whole point of leadership?
- Whom do I serve?
 - Do I include customers, employees, families, contractors and suppliers, the entire healthcare community?
- How do I serve?
 - 'Serve' is a verb. Do I put actions with my words?
- How do others observe me serving?
 - I am only a Servant Leader if others see me as a Servant Leader

Continue the conversation. The SL 360 degree assessment is the beginning of the conversation.

- Take time to reflect.
- If you don't understand some of your ratings, ask the raters to give you more information. Dig deeper.
- As you work through your action plan, ask others how you're doing.
- By simply asking, you're conveying the message that you are serious about being a Servant Leader. You are modeling Servant Leader behavior.
- Label your actions and link them to Servant Leader behaviors. Discussing these connections will help employees better understand behaviors consistent with Servant Leadership.
- Allow yourself to enjoy others' positive ratings and comments about you! Use them as a launching pad for your Servant Leader journey.

Personal Development Plan

1. Employee Name	2. Position Title	3. Grade Level GS-	4. Service/Department	5. Telephone No.
6. Short Term Goals (1yr. or less) 1. 2. 3.		7. Long Term Goal (2-3 years) 1. 2. 3.		
8. Workplace Values (list in order of priority):				
Goal	9. Action Steps What activities will you do to accomplish these goals?			10. Target Date/Timeline
Short Term Goal 1 Associated Values:				
Short Term Goal 2 Associated Values:				
Short Term Goal 3 Associated Values:				
Long Term Goal 1 Associated Values:				
Long Term Goal 2 Associated Values:				
Long Term Goal 3 Associated Values:				
Employee Signature				Date
Mentor Name/Signature				Date

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